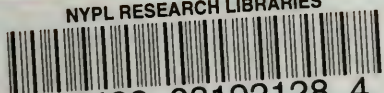


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HISTORY  
OF  
Winneshiek County,  
WITH  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES  
OF ITS  
EMINENT MEN.

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BY CHAS. H. SPARKS.

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DECORAH, IOWA :  
JAS. ALEX. LEONARD,  
Publisher and Bookseller.

*Formerly of  
Syracuse, N. Y.*



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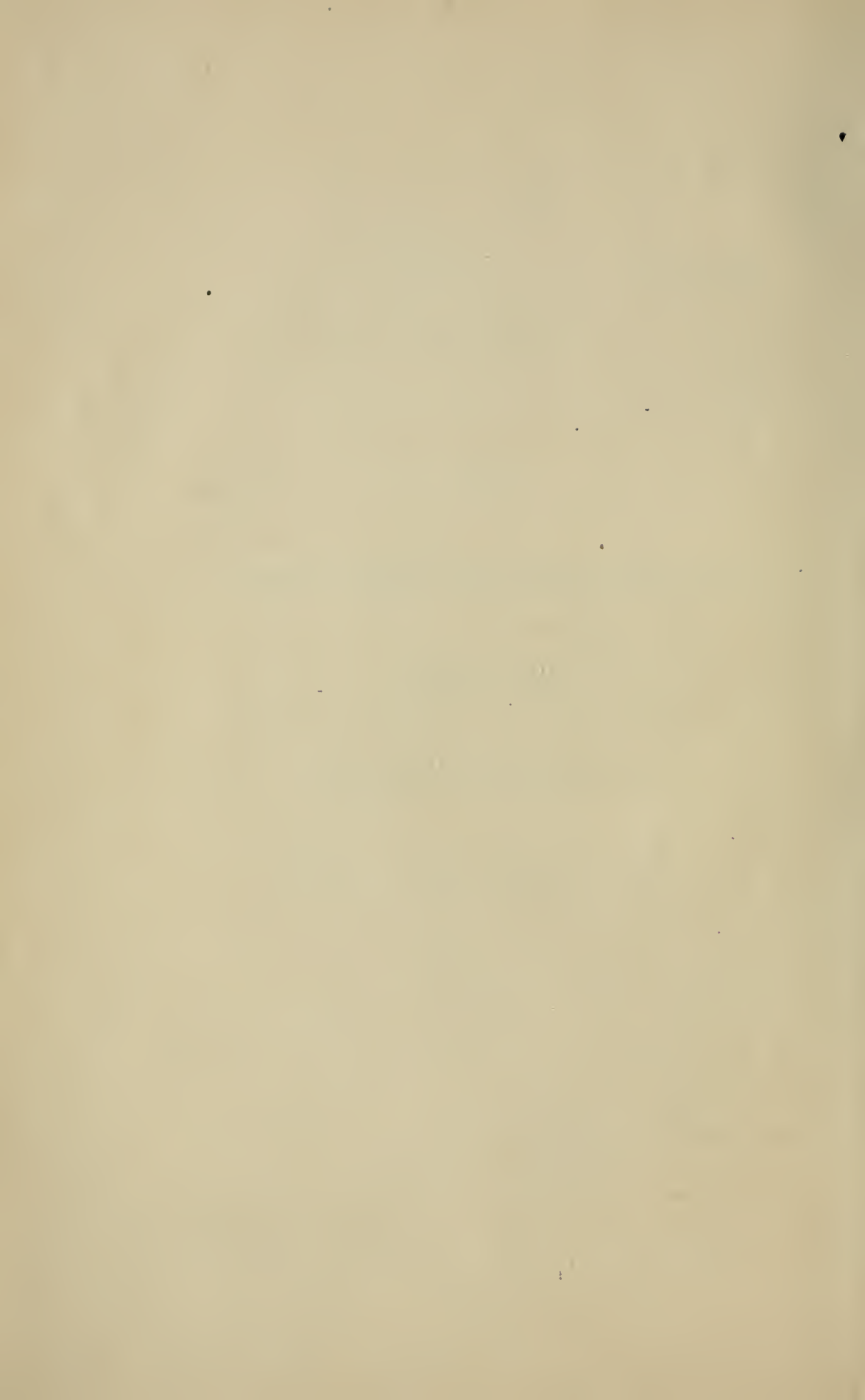


TO THE  
OLD SETTLERS OF WINNESHIEK COUNTY,

THIS VOLUME IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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The present work is the outgrowth of a series of articles written for the *Republican* during the spring of 1875. That spring I came to the county, with the intention of working for the railroad company, at Decorah. One week in its employ served to convince me that I was not fitted for the duties assigned me. I threw up my situation, and having had experience in the newspaper business, I sought the *Republican* office with a desire to obtain a situation. Messrs. Bailey & Bro. took me into their employ, with the understanding that I should make collections, and in my rounds, collate material and write historical sketches of the early settlement of the county. This last proposition—to write historical sketches—was my own, held out as an inducement to the publishers of the paper to give me a situation. I entered upon my duties in the vicinity of Fort Atkinson, and here struck a mine of historical information regarding the early days of the county, that in a few years more would have been irretrievably lost.

From facts collected regarding this locality, I wrote the first papers published in the *Republican*. These were warmly received by the reading public. So great was the interest manifested over the resurrection of a history that had so long slept, that the editor of the *Republican*, afterwards, picked up the pen where I had dropped it, and contributed several very excellent and interesting chapters regarding the early history of the county, and which, through his kindness, I have been permitted to use in this book.

The friendly reception which these several articles met with on their publication, and the deep interest felt in the subject by the early settlers, led me to believe that a history of the county, published in book form, would meet with that hearty appreciation and support such an enterprise would justly merit. I therefore carefully collected and preserved everything pertaining to the history of the county, within my reach, with the intention of publishing such a work when I thought that the proper time had arrived. During the present almost universal depression of business would seem anything but the proper time for its publication, yet, from force of necessity, I was compelled to issue now, if ever. This I do at the risk of a severe loss to myself, and with a knowledge that imperfections may thereby mar its pages that might otherwise have been prevented, by taking longer time in its preparation.

The present work has been pursued and carried through under many disadvantages, and in the face of many difficulties. I did not undertake the compilation of the book until the middle of January, 1877, and my pecuniary circumstances were such that I could not throw up my situation, and therefore evenings were the only time left for labor. But these were faithfully employed, and as a result, in less than three months time, evening work, the HISTORY OF WINNESHIEK COUNTY was completed.

I have endeavored, as best I knew how, to make the work as complete, concise and interesting as possible, and hope that I am rightly deserving a verdict from my severest critics that I have not labored in vain.

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many estimable gentlemen who have furnished me encouragement, both by deed and word, in my present undertaking.

To Mr. A. K. Bailey I am under many obligations, for access to the files of the *Republican*, from which I gleaned much valuable information, and for the material aid he has furnished me. The interesting chapter on Moneek is his.

To Mr. Cyrus Wellington I return my thanks, for the beautiful poem which closes the military history.

To the following gentlemen, all of whom have either been consulted regarding the facts herein contained, or have contributed to its pages, I return my sincere thanks: Jehu Lewis, M. D. Hesper, J. T. Atkins, O. J. Clark, J. E. Simpson, E. I. Weiser, G. R. Willett, C. W. Burdick, J. B. Kaye, Calmar, for the sketch of Calmar; S. Pike, Ridgeway, for the chapter on Ridgeway; John O. Porter and J. Fisher, Ossian; and Helge Langland.

---

I would speak a word for the advertisers whose advertisements appear in the back part of the book, as the success of the undertaking is in a great measure owing to their liberal patronage. These men were actuated by a desire to aid a deserving enterprise.

To Andreas' Atlas of Iowa, I am indebted for information regarding Decorah, and biographies of some of the eminent men that appear herein.

With these brief explanations and acknowledgements, "THE HISTORY OF WINNESHIEK COUNTY" is placed before the public, with the hope that it will meet the expectations and approbation of even the most critical.

DECORAH, IOWA, April 1st, 1877.





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# History of Winneshiek County.

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## CHAPTER I.

*Historical Researches—What Prompts Them, and Their Results—  
The Reward of the Pioneer—Winneshiek County—Its Streams—  
Thirty-five Years Ago—Old Mission—The First Gristmill.*

An insatiable desire, no doubt bred by curiosity to acquire information of the past, has ever furnished a strong incentive to the human mind to search for historical facts amid mouldy records and ancient ruins. Each item of interest so preserved from the devastating ravages of time has been carefully guarded and placed on record to shine, as its age increased, with brighter luster.

This passion of man to make himself familiar with past events has led him to resort to all known expedients, practicable and impracticable, for the acquisition of such knowledge. At the touch of his magic wand, a buried Pompeii has laid bare her bosom, disclosing the secrets of her past life—secrets that for centuries had lain buried in the debris that covered her. As a reward of his energy and perseverance in the land of the Pharaohs, the ruined temples, ancient obelisks, the pyramids of forty centuries, and also the silent mummies, have each been made to furnish information of the most ancient civilized people of the globe—the history of a people who have silently slept in death for more than three thousand years.

No undertaking has seemed too great for the historian where the goal of his ambition has been to resurrect historical facts, and no reading has proved more interesting or valuable. Every country and nation, every city and hamlet, as well as every individual, has its history, which is in a greater or less degree interesting to the general reader. More particularly is the early history of a new country valuable, not only for the interest it furnishes in its individual experiences of adventure and hardship, but for the lesson it teaches in the certain reward of energy and perseverance.

Those of the early pioneers who forsook the pleasures of civilization and bravely ventured into a wild and unknown country to hew a name

for themselves out of the native forests ; men and women who at one time mingled more with the uncouth savage than with their civilized brethren, are to-day enjoying the affluence of wealth and the comforts of pleasant homes. Such has been their reward. The hardships of pioneer life, with them, is a thing of the past, about which they can talk with pleasure.

It is little more than a quarter of a century since Winneshiek County furnished an ample arena for the pioneer, and here he experienced all the exciting adventures, hardships and privations which make his life so interesting. Winneshiek County received its name from "Winneshiek," a celebrated chief of the Winnebagoes. The county embraces an area of 468,000 acres, mostly arable land, which is extraordinarily adapted to agricultural purposes. The general surface of the country is diversified, the greater portion being fine, rolling prairie, with plenty of timber land to supply the demands of home consumption. Along the streams there are bluffs of considerable height, which in many places present a picturesque scenery rarely met with. The soil of the county, on the whole, is of a rich and loamy nature, and as productive as can be found in the state of Iowa. The county affords an abundance of clay, sand, brick and stone for building purposes, while its outcrop of Trenton limestone is burned into an excellent article of quicklime.

The county is well watered, having several important creeks within its borders. These afford excellent water power, much of which has been utilized in the various mills throughout the county. The upper Iowa River runs through the northern portion of the county, in a southeast direction, to about the center, where it flows northeasterly, in a serpentine course, to where it leaves the county on its eastern border. North of the Upper Iowa, flowing through the townships of Canoe and Pleasant, is the Canoe River, a considerable mill stream. The Turkey River runs through the southeast corner of the county, and is only second to the Iowa in size and importance. Such is a brief description of one of the richest counties in the state.

What a scene of beauty such a land must have presented to the pioneer before the science of agriculture had marred the adornments which nature had lavished upon it. Above him was the blue canopy of heaven, at his feet lay a garden of green, broken only by the embellishment of miniature forests, in which gambled wild beasts of every description known to the country, while on either side could be heard the musical ripples of crystal streams rushing swiftly over variegated beds in their course to the Gulf. Such a land must have been hailed with a glad ac-



claim of delight. It was to the pioneer the land "flowing with milk and honey."

It is now thirty-five years since the first white man looked upon this country in all its natural grandeur. Antecedent to that date we have no knowledge that even the venturesome explorer, or the soulless and avaricious Indian trader, ventured to pierce this then unknown region.

What a contrast the wild, uninhabited country of those days presents to the present populous and cultivated land, teeming with its thousands of human beings, making onward strides in improvement with the rapid tread of civilization.

Thirty-five years ago our beautiful county, now spanned with railways and telegraphic lines—necessary implements of modern civilization—decked with verdant fields of waving grain in summer, and dotted with innumerable thriving and enterprising towns, was the home of the Winnebago Indians, then numerous and comparatively thrifty, but now comprising only a few wandering ones who have not where to lay their heads. As early as 1835, Rev. D. Lowery, the man who afterwards established the Old Mission, conducted a school of like nature near the mouth of Yellow River. Mr. Lowery emigrated from Tennessee, and was a strict adherent to the sect known as the Cumberland Presbyterians. In his youth he had received the benefits of a thorough education, and was peculiarly qualified for the arduous duties of ameliorating the condition of the Indians. In 1874 he took up his residence in Pierce City, Missouri, where he died on the 19th of January, 1876, at the advanced age of 82 years. Mr. Lowery was a man of marked ability, and during the more active portion of his life was prominent in all that pertained to the history of the country in which he lived. He was, for perhaps more than fifty years, a minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A man of unusual physical make up, and possessed of a large brain, which eminently fitted him for the frontier life which he led. He was one of our noble men, and will be long remembered by many of our people, and especially by the early settlers of this portion of the great west.

In 1842 Mr. Lowery was appointed Indian Agent for the reservation which included the tract of land now known as Winneshiek County. The same year he received instructions from the Government to form a Mission and farm on the reservation, for the education of the Indians in husbandry and the English language, in hopes of civilizing and morally benefitting them. The erection of the Mission was commenced, as near as can be ascertained, in June, 1842, the Rev. D. Lowery superintending the work. The Mission was a large, commodious wooden building,

located about five miles southeast of Fort Atkinson. A remnant of one of the buildings still exists.

The Government had authorized Mr. Lowery to open a farm for the instruction of the Indians in agricultural pursuits, the expenses incurred thereby to be deducted from their annuity. Mr. Lowery turned over this part of the work to his assistant, Col. Thomas. The first year, under Col. Thomas' supervision, a farm of three hundred acres was opened, and endeavors were made to instruct the Indians how to till the soil; but they were so careless and indolent that but little work could be got out of them. The crops planted began to show neglect. In fact the farm began to retrograde, when Col. Thomas had a force of garrison men detailed to cultivate it—they being paid for their labor out of the Indian annuity. One year served to demonstrate that the Indian as a husbandman was a failure. In 1843, Col. Thomas, under instructions from the Government, built the first gristmill in Winneshiek County. The Mission and farm was continued under Col. Thomas' supervision, until the Indians sold their reservation to the Government, when they were removed, and there was no further need of these enterprises.

Lowery continued in charge of the Indian Mission some time after building it, but finally resigned to take charge of a mission in Minnesota, whereupon Gen. Fletcher was appointed to serve in his stead.

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## CHAPTER II.

*The Winnebagoes—Their Former Home—Enjoyments, &c.—Indian History—Habits and Characteristics—Their Funeral Services—Winneshiek, Head Chief of the Winnebagoes—"Wachon-Decorah"—Sodom and Gomorrah—Three Murders—Death of Taffy Jones—Removal of the Indians.*

A history of Winneshiek County, without an account of the original inhabitants, would be incomplete. In early days the Winnebago Indian was sole possessor of this land, and here for ages he held sway. This country had been his home for centuries. It was the heart of an Indian paradise. From every point of the compass, his trail centered here. It was the land of his birth, and no other furnished the same attractions for

him. It was here that he buried his dead, and with heathen reverence rendered worship to the omnipotent ruler of the spirit land, which his uncultured mind had conceived. It was from these crystal streams that he hooked the tiny trout, and through the tangled labyrinths of these miniature forests that he hunted the wild deer, the partridge and the squirrel. Here, after the manner of his patriarchal form of government, were held his councils, in which all the great men of the nation participated. Here, upon these bluffs, as he missed his mark, has he often, no doubt, made sacrifices to appease the wrath of the Great Spirit, through whose agency he firmly believed such results had been wrought. It was amidst the scenes of this wild and natural grandeur that he wooed and won the dusky maid of the forest. It was here he reared his children. Though the land was wild, and filled with experiences that to the civilian would seem unendurable, yet it was his home, and about it clustered all there was to fill his rough heart with love. The land seemed to his wild nature to contain all the enjoyments worth living for. Here, often, no doubt, were the games and sports of the young; here too, lamentations and sorrows, even as in later times, in burial scenes, as some old warrior, chief, maiden, or child, was called to depart. And here, thanksgivings, too—doubtless feasts of rejoicing at success of hunting parties, or victory in bloody strife. Yes, up to within the brief space of twenty-seven years ago, this beautiful valley was all full of life—primitive life of nature and man. But now the scene is changed, and the white man is the possessor of the land. The process has been a rapid one. A superior race has superceded these simple children of the forest, and little more than tradition remains to tell who and what they were, what habits and characteristics they possessed, or who were their rulers. But such as remain in authentic form, is here given in a bit of Indian history.

Up to 1840 the Winnebago Indians inhabited Wisconsin. In 1829 they made a treaty, whereby they ceded to the Government the entire country east of the Mississippi, to which they laid claim. They were, however, permitted to live on their old hunting grounds until it became absolutely necessary to remove them. They had become an impediment to the further settlement of Wisconsin. At this time the Government felt compelled to require them to fulfil the terms of their treaty, and go upon the new reservation west of the river. They were loth to relinquish their native hunting ground, which to them had more than a natural attraction; but the annuity offered was a large inducement, and finally prevailed. This new reservation comprised a territory, the eastern border of which was twenty miles west of the Mississippi. Fort Atkinson



was erected in order to have in their midst a garrison with which to control them. That they needed control is evident from their habits and characteristics, as described to the writer by all who were familiar with them.

The Winnebagoes were not brave and chivalrous, but vindictive and treacherous. Instead of facing a foe and braving danger, they would stealthily steal upon him and in an unguarded moment, wreak their vengeance. But these were not the worst features in this tribe. They possessed vices of a meaner and more degrading nature. They united the art of stealing to that of lying. Anything belonging to another on which they could lay their pilfering fingers, they appropriated to their own use. Their lying propensities were proverbial. They regarded the white man with envy, but stood in such fear of their Indian neighbors—the Sacs and Foxes—that they dare not oppose him, but made him their champion and protector against these warlike and powerful tribes.

They were more opulent in their annuities than any other tribe of Indians. Besides about \$100,000 in cash and goods paid them annually, large sums were expended in the vain attempt to educate and christianize them. A few among them could read and write; but in proportion as they improved in book lore, in the same, and even in a greater ratio, they deteriorated morally; and those who enjoyed the greatest advantages were the most worthless and degraded of their tribe. Every attempt that has been made to civilize them, has sunk them lower in the scale of humanity. At least this is the evidence of those who are familiar with their history. It has been reduced to an axiom, by observation and experience, that the Indian is incapable of civilization, except in rare cases. They are gradually and surely fading away. The very approach of civilization is a poison to them, from the effects of which there is no escape. Its operation is slow but sure, and but a few years will have made their annual rounds before the race will be numbered with the things of the past, and only known in history.

The Winnebagoes, after their war with the whites in 1827, were very peaceably disposed toward them. The Winnebagoes were genuine Mormons; they practiced polygamy; their marriage contracts were very simple, and to some white folks would be unsatisfactory. The Indian lover first approached the parents of his dusky sweetheart, and gave a present according to his means. If the old man was willing he signified it, and this ended the transaction. The squaw had no other alternative but to accept, and the lover would conduct his new made

bride in triumph to his own lodge. Their funeral services were equally as interesting. When one of their number died they usually wrapped the deceased in his blankets, and then prepared his grave. The Winnebagoes were born tired, consequently the grave was usually very shallow, but most always deep enough to receive the body in a reclining position, and yet be below the surface. They mourned for their departed according to the amount of whisky they imbibed. If their supply happened to be short, their wailing and crying was feeble, but if large, their manifestations of sorrow were considerably augmented, and their howling and wailing would seem sufficient to raise the dead.

Soon after the Winnebagoes were removed to the neutral ground which included, among others, what is now called Winneshiek County, Winneshiek became the ruling chief of the remnant of the once powerful Winnebagoes. The nation was divided into several bands, each band possessing a chief, and over all one "head chief," whose village extended several miles along the banks of the Iowa, about where Decorah now stands. He was the most respected of all the chiefs of his nation, and was recognized by the whites as a man of extraordinary talent and ability. He revered and loved the whites, and could speak the English language sufficiently well to trade with them. At this period Winneshiek was in the prime of life. He was a noble looking man, and a perfect specimen of physical development. His life was made burdensome by no less than six wives, the finest looking women of the nation. Judge Murdock, who was well acquainted with this celebrated chief, says that he has heard him deliver several speeches, and that he was impressed with his oratorical genius. When he fired up, and the lightnings of passion were playing across his dark face, and every nerve quivered with suppressed excitement, the effect on his listeners was thrilling to the last degree. No royal blood coursed through his veins, nor did he win his elevation by war, but by some order of the war department of the United States. Other chiefs were deposed, and Winneshiek was selected for his ability, his honor and sobriety, to reign over his people.

Wachon-Decorah, after whom two of our thriving inland cities were named, was another principal chief of the Winnebagoes. By the whites he was more familiarly called "one-eyed Decorah," having lost an eye. He, too, was a natural orator, and in his speeches would frequently boast that he had white blood in his veins. There were three brothers of the Decorahs, all men of distinction in their nation. Wachon-Decorah made a speech to the white commissioners after having served in the war



against Black Hawk, which was powerful and to the point. He explained that his tribe had been the staunch friend of the whites, and had assisted them in the war, for which they had never received any remuneration. Not only this, but by helping their white brethren they had made enemies of their Indian neighbors; and they in return, had been wreaking vengeance upon them. He said: "The Sacs hate the Winnebagoes for helping their Great Father, and when peace was made with the whites, they struck at the Winnebagoes—first at the family of the speaker. When he was away from home they stole upon his lodge and killed his wife and children; and now he thought his Great Father must have something for him."

It is believed that Wachon-Decorah and Winneshiek are still living, although researches for this information has produced nothing authentic. It was supposed by the old settlers, and many of a more recent date, at a time when the traces of Indian graves had not been totally obliterated, that Wachon-Decorah's remains lay interred at the intersection of Winnebago and Main streets, Decorah. Rev. Adams, in speaking of it in his sermon, "First Thighs of Decorah," says about the exhumation of the remains supposed to be the old chief: "Some may recollect how our bosoms swelled with respect for the old chief; with what reverence we exhumed his remains; how, in imagination, we beheld his noble form, as his skull, with its straight, black hair, was turned out by the spade; with what pomp and ceremony it was planned to remove his remains to some suitable place, possibly a monument erected—till, in gathering necessary facts for the occasion, word came back to us that Decorah was a chief greatly respected by his tribe, an old man, considerably bent over, with one eye put out, and his hair very gray. His hair very gray! All but this could have been got along with, but somehow the poetry was gone! Enthusiasm subsided!

However, if in future years, by the lapse of time, this difficulty should be obliterated, and any desire should remain to erect a monument to the old chief, they can find his bones, or those of some other poor Indian, safely deposited in a rough box a few inches below the surface of the ground, close to the northeast corner of the Court House Yard."

If there was one class of men more than another responsible for inciting the Indian to hostilities against the whites, it was the low, grovelling Indian trader. His stock of goods usually consisted of a few worthless trinkets and a barrel of whisky; and his *modus operandi* was to secrete his stock in some dense thicket near the Indians, and close enough to the whites for protection. He would exchange his fire-water



at an exorbitant price for their furs. In early days our frontier was not slighted by this class. Soon after the Indians were removed to the reservation, two men of this stripe established their retreats on or as near the line as they dared, for they were prohibited by the Government from going upon the reservation.

Taft Jones was an individual of this character. He hailed from Fort Crawford, and located a trading post in the vicinity of Monona, giving it the name of "Sodom." Another genius, named Graham Thorn, started a trading post in close proximity to Sodom, and called it "Gomorrhah."

The Indians used to frequent these places, and, of course, usually got badly cheated. It is a matter of recollection that once in a trial before Hon. T. S. Wilson, the first judge of this part of the country, a witness testified to things that happened at Sodom and Gomorrhah. The Judge was disposed to become indignant, and asked, somewhat pointedly, if the witness was not imposing on the Court. The reply was given by Judge Murdock, then a young attorney, "Oh no, your Honor; these places do actually exist."

The old Mayor of Sodom crossed long since to the other side of Jordan.

During the sojourn of the Indians on their reservation three murders were committed, to-wit: that of the Gardner family, in Fayette county; of Riley, near Monona; and of Herchy, near the mouth of the Volga. In all of these cases whisky was the inciting cause, and some of the parties undoubtedly deserved their fate.

In the Riley case, a small party of Indians were encamped on a tributary of the Yellowstone river, four or five miles from Monona. An old Indian visited Taft Jones' den, at Sodom, and (as many a "pale-face" has since done in similar cases) traded all his wordly effects for whisky. He even sold the blanket from his shoulders. Becoming intoxicated, he was turned out of doors, and on his way to his lodge died from exposure and cold. The next morning his son, a youth of about twenty summers, found the body of his father lying in the snow, naked and frozen. His revengeful feelings were aroused, and going to the whisky-den at Gomorrhah, he shot at the first man he saw through the window. Unfortunately it happened to be an inoffensive man named Riley. A detachment of troops under command of Lieut. David S. Wilson, now Judge of Dubuque Circuit Court, was sent out to capture the Indian who committed the murder. He was apprehended, taken to Fort Atkinson, and confined in the guard-house, but by the conniv-

ance of a sympathizing white man he escaped and was never recaptured.

Jones lived but a short time after this occurrence. Dr. Andros, of this city, witnessed his death, and describes it as follows: "I was traveling from Fort Atkinson to Prairie du Chien, and as I was passing by Sodom I was called in to see Taffy Jones. I found him on his bed in a miserable condition, and dying from chronic alcoholism. His countenance was horrible to look upon. He seemed to have but one thought, one wish. His only cry was whisky! whisky! whisky! I told Thorn, who was his 'right-bower,' that Taffy was dying, and to gratify his last wish. A tumbler of whisky was held to his lips, and he swallowed it with all the gusto that marks the smallest babe while drawing nourishment from the breast of its mother. In a few hours he died, a striking illustration of the old adage, 'The ruling passion strong in death.'"

The murder of the Gardner family was caused by whisky. Gardner kept a whisky-shop, and it seems a number of Indians called at his place for their favorite beverage. He dealt out the whisky to them until they were intoxicated, and he, becoming alarmed, refused to let them have any more. They then determined to take the whisky by force, whereupon Gardner offered resistance. He was seized by the demons and dispatched. His defenseless wife and innocent babe were next assassinated, and his daughter, a beautiful girl about twelve years old, was reserved for a more terrible fate.

At the time the Winnebagoes were removed they numbered about four thousand, and were scattered over their reservation, or what was then called "the neutral ground." Four bands were located near the Fort and Agency. The other bands were located more remote. Where the city of Decorah now stands was a large band under the government of the hereditary chief Decorah; hence the name. This country was at that time an Indian paradise, abounding in fish and game. The sale of their lands to the Government by their chiefs, and their acceptance of a new home in Minnesota, was very unsatisfactory to the Indians themselves. For a long time they refused to comply with the agreement entered into by their chiefs, and only consented when compelled by force of United States troops. Owing to their reluctance to remove, the whole summer was spent in their ejection. One band, governed by a chief called "The Dandy," would not go upon the land assigned them, but returned with their chief to Black River, Wisconsin, where they remained till the summer of 1874, when they were finally removed (at a great expense to the Government) to the home of the

tribe west of the Missouri. They remained on their new hunting-grounds selected by the Government only a few months, when they returned to their old homes without aid. This example verifies their attachment to the homes of their childhood and the graves of their fathers.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### FIRST THINGS.

*The Oldest Settler—The Pioneers—First Farmer—First Blacksmith—First Birth—Where was Lewiston?—Grab All and Rattle Trap—Whisky Grove—The First Bohemians—Is there Coal in Winneshiek County?—First Postoffice—A Souvenir—First Marriage—First Death and Grave Yard—The First Public School—The First School Teacher.*

It is difficult to discriminate, exactly, as to whom belongs the honor of being the first permanent settler. It lies between Mr. A. R. Young, of Fort Atkinson, and Hamilton Campbell and wife, of Bloomfield township. Mr. A. R. Young, residing on his farm, celebrated as the defunct Lewiston, was a member of the garrison stationed at the fort, and the only soldier who remained and became a permanent resident. He married a daughter of one of the first comers. If to him is accorded the right of a settler from the time of his coming to the fort as a soldier, then he is the oldest resident beyond all dispute. But if, on the contrary, the honor of being a settler is not accorded to him until after he was mustered out of the service and began to till the soil, then to Hamilton Campbell and wife belongs the credit.

Hamilton Campbell and wife made a claim, June 7th, 1848, on sections 23 and 26, in what is now Bloomfield township, and there to-day they are honored residents.

Dr. F. Andros, formerly of Decorah, but now residing in McGregor, was surgeon at the fort, but on its abandonment he removed to Clayton county, where for twenty-five years, or more, he was a useful and honored citizen.



From 1842 to 1848, the only resident families on the Winnebago reservation, except such as were in Government employ, were those of Joel Post and Mr. Wilcox. The latter resided about forty rods south of the fort, on the road leading to the Indian Agency, or Mission. Both these men were special favorites of office holders, and were permitted by the Indian Agency to keep houses of entertainment for the accommodation of persons visiting the fort and agency. The information to be obtained in relation to Wilcox is very meagre. Beyond the above fact we have been unable to ascertain anything in relation to his history, and it is not believed that he was long a resident.

Mr. Joel Post was the first farmer, and first actual settler on the reservation. Soon after the Government had decided to establish Old mission and Fort Atkinson, he conceived the idea that a half-way house for the accommodation of parties engaged in transporting building material and supplies from Fort Crawford to Fort Atkinson would prove profitable. He therefore made application to the General Government to establish such a house on the reservation, which he was allowed to do. He erected a log house in 1841, on the site where Postville now stands. The same spring, he broke up some ground and raised crops. This preceded the Mission farm by a year.

Harmon Snyder was the first blacksmith who worked at his trade in Winneshiek County. He came from Prairie du Chien with the force detailed to build the fort, and was employed, chiefly, in work for the garrison. At the same time, he did a great deal of work for the Indians. They would stand around and watch him while at his work, with wonder and admiration. How long he remained, and whither he went, must remain an untold story, for lack of information.

The credit of being the first white child born in the county belongs to Miss Mary Jane Tapper, this being her maiden name. She was born at the fort, on the 16th of January, 1841. She is the daughter of Mr. James and Mrs. Ellen Tapper, who were married in New York city in 1838, and emigrated from there to St. Louis, arriving at their destination on the 10th of May, 1840. Mr. Tapper met Government officials at this place, and with about fifty other mechanics contracted to come out into the then wild and comparatively unknown region of Iowa, and construct a fort, said fort being Fort Atkinson. Mr. Tapper is an Englishman, and came to this country in 1828. He now resides two miles southeast of Monona.

Mary Jane Tapper, the first white child born in the county, married a

Mr. Robert M. Boyce, and resides with her husband two miles north of Monona.

The honor of being the second white child born in the county, so far as can be ascertained, belongs to Miss E. Thomas, of Prairie du Chien, a lady of marked talent and pleasing social attainments. She was born in 1844, at the Old Mission, where her parents resided, her father, Col. Thomas, being in charge of the Mission at the time.

The settlement of the county was so rapid that in 1850 the pioneers felt themselves old enough to organize. Prior to that time the land had been surveyed and brought into market. In 1850, J. L. Carson was appointed organizing officer, and an election for a temporary organization ordered. At that time there were fewer polling places than now, there being only three. Their names serve to show where the settlers were located. They were Decorah, Moneek and Lewiston. Many have asked without receiving an answer, "Where is Lewiston?" My researches enable me to answer this query: In 1850 it promised to be a town of note. It was the speculator's "Napoleon;" but Lewis Harkins, then in charge of the Government property, and Mr. Francis Rogers, joint owners of the land, became involved in a quarrel regarding their individual interests in the town plat, which finally resulted in the wreck of all the bright hopes before entertained as to the future prosperity of Lewiston. To-day there is not a vestige of its remains. Even the records give no account of its whereabouts, and this one vote is the only recorded evidence of its existence. In another generation this fact would have been buried from the researches of the historian, as only a few of the old settlers remain who are able to verify the early existence of such a place. Francis Rogers and Lewis Harkins were the proprietors of the land where Lewiston was laid out, and the place derived its name from Harkins' given name. The old settlers say that Lewiston was a regularly laid out town, situated one mile north of Old Mission, on what is now known as the Rogers farm, owned by Aaron Young, who at that time was Second Sergeant of Company C.

Among the defunct places of notoriety that existed in the early history of Winneshiek County, was a spot bearing the eupheneous name of Grab-all. The place noted by this title was a high bench of timber land, half way between the Iowa trail and Postville. It was given this name because the Government stationed a sergeant's guard there, to "grab all" the Indians passing that way, for removal.

The next place worthy of special mention is Rattletrap. Rattletrap of early times is known to-day as Castalia. At the time the town bore



this name it consisted of one solitary log house, owned and superintended over by one of the most natural and original of Erin's daughters, Mrs. John Powell. I have it from reliable authority that she was capable of talking a common regiment of Decorah lawyers blind in less than no time. It would be comforting to believe this statement, but when one stops to consider the capability of the Decorah lawyers, it is accepted only as a rough joke perpetrated on the old woman.

Whisky Grove was a popular resort for the soldiers stationed at Fort Atkinson. The grove that became thus noted is located just east of Calmar. An incident showing why it was given this name, is related in substance as follows: It was near the time when the Indians would receive their annuity, and the soldiers at the fort their pay, that a half-breed procured a barrel of whisky at Fort Crawford, loaded it on his wagon and transported it to this particular grove. The soldiers were secretly informed of the fact, and the most of them got gloriously drunk. The first intimation the commander of the garrison had of its existence was the beastly intoxication of his men, and even then he was unable to ascertain its location. The half-breed remained here for some time, and carried on a thriving business. The soldiers who patronized him would not betray his whereabouts to their commander.

- The winter of 1853-4 the first immigration of Bohemians came to the county, settling in the vicinity of Fort Atkinson. There were eight families of them. The winter was severe in the extreme, and the following incident is told of it:

One day in mid-winter two boys, members of a Bohemian family who had settled near Spillville, were dispatched to Waucoma to mill. At the time they left their homes nothing betokened a storm. But on their return, when they were near the Van Dyke place, one of our much-dreaded Iowa "blizzards" overtook them. The elements were convulsed, and emitted forth the blinding snow in voluminous quantities. The wind swept across the bare prairies a perfect tornado. Becoming enveloped in such a storm, they soon became confused, and lost their way. No one can describe what their feelings were when the certainty of their being lost on the wild prairie in such a storm dawned upon them. Conjectures only can be made. That they thought of their anxious parents and little brothers and sisters waiting patiently for their return, which, alas! would never be; that they at times gave way to grief as they speculated on their dreadful fate; or again at other times would become courageous when a ray of hope would break on their clouded way, or when despair would fill their hearts, that they sought the Giver

of Life in fervent supplication to spare their lives and guide them safely to their homes. That they did all this would be but natural. The prayers of anxious parents availed nothing. God in His wisdom denied their petitions. The boys were frozen to death. A drift of driven snow was their last resting place, and the snow their winding sheet. It was twelve days thereafter before the bodies of the unfortunate boys were found. Both oxen were found to be alive. One had forced himself from the yoke, and was browsing near by, while the other was held an unwilling prisoner.

Mr. Aaron Young tells the following story of the early discovery of coal deposits in the south part of Winneshiek County. Mr. Young was a soldier at the Fort at the time of the reputed discovery. He says:

The discovery was made by one of the regular soldiers, who used to go on horseback from the Fort and return in less than an hour's time, bringing with him a sack of coal. These trips were always made in the night, and alone. He allowed no one to accompany him, nor would he divulge his secret. Although the officers tried bribing him, punishing him, and finally got him drunk, in hopes he would be more confiding; but all to no purpose. His time was nearly out, and he said he calculated to open the coal mine as soon as it expired. But before the time came his company was ordered to Florida, where he was shot, dying almost instantly, leaving no one in possession of his valuable secret.

Another story is that the Indians used to bring coal in their blankets to sell to the blacksmith, or when they wanted a pony shod, and that an old Indian chief, by the name of Four-Eyes, offered to tell where the coal was, at one time, for two ponies. But as nobody had the ponies, the bargain was not consummated, and the old chieftain took his knowledge away with him to the Far West. That coal was obtained in some mysterious way by the soldier there is no doubt; but to convince the scientific man that he obtained it from deposits in Winneshiek County will require stronger evidence than the above stories furnish. Every person familiar with the geological topography of the county well understands how unreasonable such an idea is.

The first church erected in Winneshiek County, excepting the old Mission Chapel, was built about the year 18—, in the vicinity of Twin Springs. It was Catholic. Father Leuvent officiated. The site was selected and the church directed to be built by Bishop Lovas, of Dubuque, who was the first ordained Bishop in Iowa.

The first duly commissioned postmaster in Winneshiek County was James B. Cutler, of Osage, then a sterling pioneer of the county. He

located on the Atkin Farm, Frankville Township. The commission confers on James B. Cutler the appointment of postmaster of Jamestown, and bears the signature of Nathaniel K. Hall, Postmaster General under Milliard Fillmore, and dated the 18th day of September, 1851. Judge J. T. Atkins served as assistant postmaster. The office was discontinued March 31, 1852. Mr. Leonard Cutler and family came to the county May 30, 1850, which places them among the early pioneers. The father of Mr. James B. Cutler is still living at the advanced age of ninety-six years.

Among the various souvenirs seen by the author, retained as mementoes of olden times, is a shipping-bill of certain mill irons brought from Galena to Lansing by "the good steamboat called the Nominee," consigned to Messrs. Beard & Cutler, and dated the 29th of March, 1852. These mill irons were used by Beard & Cutler in what was in 1860 known as the Rogers Mill, on the Canoe, and now known as Spring-water Mill, now owned by Mr. A. Bradish. The erection of the mill began in the fall of 1851, and it was running July 8, 1852. Probably it was the first saw-mill north of the Iowa river.

In 1850 a young man came from Norway to Iowa and found a spot of ground that suited him in what is now known as Madison Township, Winneshiek County. So far as ascertained, he was its first settler. In the year following an older man followed him, who was the father of at least one girl. As young men and maidens will, this young man and this maiden agreed to wed. These parties were Johannes Evenson and Catherine Helen Anderson. At that time, as now, the law required the parties to have a license. In order to obtain this a visit to the Judge was necessary. Rev. N. Brandt, then a wandering missionary, was in the county, and would perform the ceremony. And if this chance escaped them, no knowing when another opportunity would be afforded them. Mr. Evenson straightway started for Bloomfield Township, to see the Judge and get a permit to enter into a matrimonial alliance. The missionary had promised to await his return. Mr. E. found the Judge absent. He had gone to Dubuque on official business. Imagine the sensations of that waiting bridegroom! Again the question: Would that minister tarry? After three days Judge Reed returned, and with his license in his pocket, John turned his footsteps homeward a happier man. No grass grew under his feet on that trip. The minister had remained, and the marriage ceremony was performed—the first, as the records show, to have been performed in the county. The license for this marriage was granted on the 5th day of October, 1851. The



second marriage license was granted on the 3d of November, 1851. The contracting parties were Erick Anderson and Miss Ann Soles.

The first death to occur in the county was that of a Government teamster named Howard. He was engaged in the transportation of material from Fort Crawford to Fort Atkinson, to be used in the construction of the latter. On the 3d of October, 1840, a heavy snow had fallen, and on the next day Mr. Howard started from Joel Post's place, or Postville, to go to Fort Atkinson. A party following in his wake the next day were surprised to find his loaded wagon in the road and team and driver gone. They followed his track up to near the present site of Castalia, where they found him frozen stiff in death. The same day his remains were brought to the Fort, and on the next, or 5th of October, 1846, he was buried. This information is authenticated, and shows that the date of the first death and graveyard preceeded the first birth by one year, and the first marriage by eleven years. In fact, the graveyard had quite an encouraging start over the marriage era. However much consolation this may have afforded the departed, they may be assured, that in after years, the matrimonial fever swept the county like an epidemic, finding victims on every side.

It is worthy of note that the first public school building was built at the corners of the following townships, Decorah, Springfield, Glenwood and Frankville, in the center of a Norwegian settlement. This event is worthy of record, as it serves to illustrate the strong desire the Norwegian people have to advance their mental condition. Even here, inhabitants of a wild country, and isolated from the world as they were, they found means of encouraging education. In 1852, principally through their efforts, a small, unpretentious log school-house was built at the Corners, and in it the late Mrs. Erick Anderson, then a young woman, taught the first school.

## CHAPTER IV.

## FIRST SETTLERS.

*The First Settlers—The First Tax List—First Assessment—A Welcome Reception—A List of Settlers by Townships—The Richest Man—Bloomfield—Frankville—Military—Washington—Springfield—Jackson—Decorah—Madison—Bluffton—Canoe—Glenwood—Pleasant—Personality Assessments.*

The previous chapters show, with considerable accuracy, who were the residents previous to 1851. The following chapter, perhaps the most valuable in the entire book—valuable for the historical information it contains—is in a great measure the work of Mr. A. K. Bailey, editor of the *Decorah Republican*.

In 1851 the county was organized. Its officers were elected, and we may presume regularly inducted into office. They needed money in compensation for their services, and then as now it had to be raised by taxes. Happily the first tax list of the county is preserved. The lists for 1853 and 1854 are gone, and this volume was rescued ten years ago by Mr. A. K. Bailey while serving the public as county treasurer, from a box of old papers that were stowed away in an unused closet of the Court House. It should be scrupulously kept as a relic. It is in a fair state of preservation. The contrast between this volume and that of 1862—ten years only—is a complete history in itself of the rapid growth of Winneshiek county. That of 1862 is a volume of nearly a thousand pages of the largest ledger size. This of 1852 is but a small, home-made book of 62 pages, composed of double blue foolscap, with its columns ruled off by hand, and bound in a beautiful sample of Indian-tanned buckskin. The warrant for collecting the taxes bears date September 15th, 1852; is addressed to Daniel Kuykendall, treasurer, and is signed by D. R. Reed, county judge. The title page bears the signature of "Morris B. Derrick, Clerk"—a man who was, for a time, at least, a partner of Aaron Newell, at the old Pioneer Store, of Decorah.

This volume, we believe, is really a complete list of the residents (who had any property) in the fall of 1851. Although dated many months later, the work of preparing the list was begun at a time when it would have been impossible to include the settlers who came in 1853. We learn from others that the assessment which was preliminary, was made

by A. H. Fannon, the jolly old constable, who still serves the public. He says it was begun and made early in the spring, before the immigration of 1852 had set in, and he thinks all whose names are included in it had arrived in 1851 or before. Mr. F. made the assessment as sheriff; says he was really the first sheriff; and this was one of the first of his official acts. This claim is in collision with the records, and we cannot undertake to reconcile the discrepancy. In making the list Mr. F. says he sometimes could not visit more than half a dozen families in a day, so widely were they scattered, particularly in the north half of the county, but he always found a welcome reception, and a hearty invitation to "sit up to the table" when meal time brought him to one of their cabins. The residents in the northern tier of townships, however, strongly objected to being assessed; not that they wished to escape taxation, but because it was doubtful in their minds whether they dwelt in Iowa or Minnesota. Mr. E. E. Meader gives this information. He, personally, wished to be in Iowa, and had the happiness of finding, when the lines were run, that he had located his cabin just right in order to secure the land he wanted, and at the same time remain an Iowan. This much of outside history to the volume. Now for the stories its pages reveal. We find in it the names of 446 persons. Perhaps some of these were not residents, but the list contains many a known and familiar name. A large share are assessed with personality only; which means that they had not secured their lands, and had only the "improvements," or a little stock to pay tribute on. It will be impossible to locate most of these in making a list of settlers by townships, as we propose to do; but whenever lands are named, the townships and ranges will be an unerring guide. Preliminary to this, however, let us give a few general facts. Lands were assessed at the Government price, \$1.25 per acre. As land was plenty at this price, it is fair to presume that assessments were made at the full cash value. The taxes were only four in number besides the poll tax, viz: county, state, school and road, and they summed fifteen mills. In these later days, when assessments are made at one-third of the cash value, taxation is high if it reaches twenty-five mills, with township school taxes included. There are no footings to show what the total value of the assessed property was; but the taxes themselves aggregated as follows:

County tax.....	\$696 68
State tax.....	175 08
School tax.....	115 42
Road tax.....	230 75

\$1,217 93



besides \$650 of poll taxes. This would make the total assessable property in the county at that time, worth \$182,789.

The richest man in the county was John McKay, of Washington Prairie. He paid the enormous sum of \$23.94 in taxes. Francis Teabout was close up to him, being down for \$23.16. Benjamin Beard followed with \$20.95. These three were the very rich men, for they were the only ones who paid more than \$20; or, rather, were regularly assessed for sums that amounted to precisely that figure. The list of other persons who paid over \$10 is so short that we give the names in full:

Joseph Spillman, Calmar.....	\$18 96
Levi Moore, Burr Oak.....	17 68
Moses McSwain, Bloomfield.....	16 83
James S. Ackerson, Burr Oak.....	16 00
James B. Cutler, Frankville.....	15 78
Newell & Derrick, Decorah.....	15 73
Ingebret Peterson, Decorah.....	14 82
Isaac Callender, Frankville.....	14 32
Samuel Allen, Bloomfield.....	14 30
O. W. Emery, Decorah.....	13 81
Gideon Green, Bloomfield.....	13 59
C. E. Brooks, Military.....	13 04
David Bartlett, Canoe.....	12 76
J. T. Atkins, Frankville.....	12 29
Joseph Huber, Washington.....	11 27
Abner DeCow, Bloomfield.....	11 24
W. F. Kimball, Decorah.....	11 17
Wm. Cummings, Bloomfield.....	11 13
Richard M. Carson, Washington.....	11 13
Wm. Campbell, Bloomfield.....	11 05
Andrew Mayer, Washington.....	10 83
John W. Smith, Frankville.....	10 72
James D. McKay, Frankville.....	10 09

This table indicates that the wealth of the county then centered on Washington Prairie. Decorah with her present capital certainly makes a poor showing. The population, too, was most numerous there. This the following table, showing all the names to which land is assessed, will more clearly show. Although the majority of those named have passed away, there are enough familiar names to make it interesting reading, and worth preserving:

#### BLOOMFIELD.

Samuel Allen.....	200	Charles Hawthorn.....	40
G. B. Abbmar.....	40	Benj. Hawk.....	200
Charles Anderson.....	160	John W. Jenkins.....	160

Geo. Blake.....	240	Samuel B. Jones.....	80
John Braumire.....	80	Tasa T. Kendt.....	40
Samuel Clark.....	140	Maria Lacy.....	40
John Cowen.....	360	Henry McSwain.....	160
Wm. Clark.....	20	Moses McSwain.....	120
Grace Cohen.....	40	John McMartin.....	40
Jonathan Dean.....	80	Nathan McKinley.....	80
David Duff.....	120	Henry Noble.....	40
Abner DeCow.....	480	Andrew Stewart.....	120
Wm. Elliott.....	40	Margaret Slaughter.....	40
Samuel N. Faint.....	80	Kund Thompson.....	40
Gideon Green.....	400	Richard Thomas.....	80
Levi Grundy.....	80	John Thompson.....	160
Adam Garen.....	40		

## FRANKVILLE.

J. T. Atkins.....	560	James Kilgore.....	160
Antin Anderson.....	80	Edward Knight.....	240
Robert Angers.....	160	Benj. Knight.....	80
Christ. Anderson.....	80	John Krauder.....	40
Lucy Adams.....	160	Alanson Loomis.....	160
Henry Brandt.....	160	Ole Anderson Loma.....	80
John C. Buckley.....	260	J. D. McKay.....	160
Benson Egbert.....	160	John McKay.....	480
Thomas Beard.....	400	Miron Dean.....	40
Benjamin Beard.....	480	M. McSwain.....	200
Wm. Beard.....	40	John Martin.....	320
Wm. Birdsell.....	240	Drury Mays.....	160
John Bennett.....	80	John F. Neider.....	80
Besalid Bennett.....	160	Erick B. Olson.....	240
Isaac Calender.....	520	Erick Olson.....	160
William Cummings.....	400	Knud Olson.....	160
James Cutlip.....	180	Robert Pierce.....	160
Edward Carter.....	80	Samuel Peterson.....	160
Francis Carlton.....	80	Harris Reed.....	160
David Duff.....	160	D. Richtie.....	160
Emanuel Dean.....	160	J. H. Ransom.....	160
James Dunn.....	160	Dwight Rathbun.....	240
Francis Durst.....	40	Walter Rathbun.....	160
H. D. Evans.....	240	John W. Smith.....	320
J. H. Gellelan.....	80	Jas. B. Schenck.....	160
Egbret Gulbranson.....	80	Andrew Stewart.....	40
Joseph Gordon.....	80	James Smith.....	160
Ole Hulverson.....	160	S. Schrekner.....	80
J. H. Hawk.....	240	Josiah T. Tuttle.....	200
Isaac Hawk.....	240	George Teeple.....	160
John Halver.....	160	Francis Teabout.....	640

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Levi Hubbell.....	160	Knud Toleffson.....	87
Samuel Hood.....	80	Elizabeth Tuttle.....	40
Elizabeth Joiner.....	160	Wm. Woods.....	120
Matlen Johnson.....	320	Oliver F. Woods.....	80

## MILITARY.

John Anderson.....	160	William J. Peck.....	160
Mary Ashby.....	40	Andrew Sharp.....	160
Chauncy Brooks.....	160	T. H. Semiss.....	80
C. E. Brooks.....	160	Jacob Smith.....	40
Dolvy Howard.....	160	Tolef and Lars Tosten.....	200
John O. Porter.....	160	Charles K. Wood.....	40
Geo. Bechel.....	80	Jas. C. H. Miller.....	80
Martin Bechel.....	80	Andrew Meyer.....	200
John L. Carson.....	160	John S. Neal.....	160
Geo. A. Clark.....	160	Francis N. Palmer.....	160
Wm. H. Fulton.....	160	Harvey P. Waters.....	80
John Gardner.....	320	Gardner Waters.....	160
Lewis Harkins.....	160	Aaron Young.....	1
Joseph Huber.....	440		

## SPRINGFIELD.

Jacob Abrahamson.....	160	O. A. Lomen.....	80
J. B. Cutler.....	40	Ole Larson.....	80
Knud Gulbranson.....	120	Wm. Lansing.....	160
Ole Gullikson.....	160	Michael Omlie.....	80
Egbert Gulbranson.....	80	Thomas Simonson.....	160
Halvor Halvorson.....	160	T. Holverson.....	80
Erick Clements.....	160	Ole Tostenson.....	80

## JACKSON.

Joseph Spillman.....	40
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## DECORAH.

Jacob Abrahamson.....	80	M. A. Meintner.....	160
Thos. P. Barker.....	80	Philip Morse.....	200
Ann Bowie.....	40	Joseph McGehee.....	80
John L. Carson.....	200	Newell & Derrick.....	42
William Day.....	160	R. G. Newland.....	40
Claiborne Day.....	160	Engebret Peterson.....	480
Nathan Drake.....	160	Amasa Perkins.....	40
Adams Dexter.....	160	William Parker.....	80
O. W. Emery.....	327	Thomas Robertson.....	160
N. S. Gilbert.....	74	Joseph Reed.....	240
Thor Gulbranson.....	120	A. Simmonson.....	160
Geo. W. Hazel.....	200	Jason Tuttle.....	160
Adam Heckart.....	240	John R. Townsley.....	80
W. F. Kimball.....	200	Abraham Taxell.....	40
Daniel Kuykendahl.....	280	Geo. A. Wigeland.....	160

## MADISON.

H. Anstenson.....	80	Peter Jamison.....	200
Ole Asleson.....	40	Chas. McLaughlin.....	40
John Evenson.....	80	H. Oleson.....	40
Jane Fletcher.....	40	Wilson Smith.....	200
Ever Gulbranson.....	80	Tolef Tuleston.....	160
Ole Gunderson.....	80		

## BLUFFTON.

Benjamin Disbie.....	80	M. A. Meinter.....	160
Philo S. Curtis.....	80	Levi Moore.....	40
E. Chapmen.....	320	Geo. Smith.....	160
Geo. A. Clark.....	160	Robert Stockton.....	160
Emery Burritt.....	203	James Turner.....	74
Geo. R. Emery.....	40	Daniel Wheeler.....	80
S. E. Fairbanks.....	160	Henry Wilson.....	40
Bernard Harmon.....	160		

## CANOE.

James J. Ackerson.....	160	J. Hornson.....	196
John Bodinson.....	40	L. Iverson.....	75
David Bartlett.....	480	Thos. Kennedy.....	40
Samuel Bolinger.....	160	John Knudson.....	240
Jas. B. Cutler.....	40	David Kinnison.....	204
Wm. T. Cochrane.....	80	S. M. Leach.....	240
J. Freedenberger.....	200	E. B. Horton.....	160
B. F. Giles.....	120	Elizabeth Potter.....	40
N. S. Giblert.....	80	Ole Snear.....	40
Michael Gatlin.....	154	Wm. Shirley.....	40
Lorenzo Gates.....	160	N. Updegraff.....	160
Joseph Harper.....	160	Wm. B. Updegraff.....	320
H. Holverson.....	160		

## GLENWOOD.

J. T. Atkins.....	80	Permany Hantly.....	40
Robert Angus.....	80	C. N. Hatch.....	40
Philander Baker.....	160	Nels Johnson.....	160
John Barthel.....	160	German Johnson.....	163
Levi Barnhouse.....	80	Geo. Keatings.....	80
John C. Buckley.....	40	Wm. Kyrk.....	40
David Bender.....	160	John S. Morse.....	80
Daniel Becknell.....	80	Lyman Morse.....	80
L Carmichael.....	40	Thor Severson.....	100
Chas. Benjamin.....	120	W. Sanford.....	176
Julien Dougherty.....	40	Tosten Nelson.....	80
F. M. Fuller.....	160	Lebrend Whitney.....	40
Torkel Hanson.....	160	Leroy C. Walter.....	320



## PLEASANT.

Benj. Beard.....	160	John Klontz.....	166
J. B. Cutler.....	160	Peter K. Londgon.....	120
H. Halverson.....	40	Ole Magnuson.....	160

This completes the entire list of landed assessments, and, it will be seen, includes only twelve of the twenty townships. Of the eight others no mention is made. These were the four in the northern tier, and four out of five on the west side. The fifth has only one assessment, and that is to a resident in Calmar township. That there were dwellers or squatters on this territory is beyond question; because some of them—like Mr. Meader, D. D. Huff, and others, who came as early as 1851—are still living on the land they selected in that year. These lands, however, did not really come into market until a year or two later, so that settlers could acquire title. For this reason they were assessed, if at all, with “personality” only. A list of these will complete, what I believe to be the most perfect list that can be obtained of the really “first settlers”—those who were here and took part in the organization of the county. In the foregoing lists, as well as in the following, there are doubtless some non-residents; but these cannot, at this late day, be selected out. The names that follow are those of persons of the latter classes, who cannot be assorted into townships as a whole. Many of them, however, can be readily located by the reader:

Anderson, Erick	Huber, Anthony	Olson, Ole (five of 'em)
Anderson, John	Herzog, George	Oleson, Barney
Avins, Toleff	Harkins, H.	Oleson, Magnus
Ackerson, James	Herbranson, Ole	Olson Andrew
Andrus, Erastus V.	Holm, Henry	Olson, Holver (two)
Bush, John	Hollenbach, Benjamin	Olson, Christian
Brandt, John	Howard, John R.	Olson, John
Banning, William	Herbranson, Knud	Oleson, James
Brisco, Jeremiah	Horton, William	Oleson, George
Brown, Joseph	Howe, Phillip	Oleson, Arne
Bachel, Lewis	Hostetler, Moses	Oleson, Herman
Bear, Benjamin	Hoverson, Christopher	Oleson, Knutson
Bisby, L. W.	Johnson, Halvor	Ostrander, J.
Brown, Madison	Johnson, John	Painter, William
Benson, Ole	Johnson, Ever	Peterson, Ole
Brush, Samuel F.	Johnson, John R.	Pierce, D. W.
Bateman, John	Johnson, John G.	Padden, William
Banning, Phineas	Johnson, Andrew	Reed, David
Chase, Alva	Johnson, Martin	Reed, Daniel
Carson, Richard M.	Johnson, Michael	Ruller, John
Campbell, Hamilton	Knudson, Raid	Rosa, Abraham

Chase, James G.	Knudson, Andrew	Reams, John
Cross, James	Knudson, Toleff	Riley, Conrad
Callahan, Cornelius	Klontz, William	Riddle, S.
Dexter, Oscar C.	Kincaid, A. L.	Russell, A.
Dickerson, Thomas	Knudson, Elmar	Stuart, John
DeCow, John	Krech, Charles	Sharpe, William
Davidson, D.	Krumm, G. S.	Shafer, John
Everson, Christian	Krumm, G. L.	Spencer M. B.
Everson, Hover	Krumm, Theophilus	Sherwin, M. B.
Erickson, Gilbert	Klein, J. N.	Simonson, Ole
Frasier, David	Kelley, James	Tate, George W.
Fannon, Acles H.	Knudson, Ever	Townsend, Michael
Fisher, Nelson	Lyon, James	Thoreson, Ole
Graudy, Orson	Larson, Ellick	Torgrimson, Jacob
Goodwater, Benjamin	Livengood, John	Thaath, Sebastian
Goodmanson, K.	Larson, Knud	Thompson, Ephraim
Gulbranson, George	Larkins, Valentine	Torkleson, Nelson
Goddard, Josiah	Larson, Halgrim	Thaat, George
Helmer, George	Lathrop, Phillip	Toreson, Mykle
Hoverson, Andrew,	Moore, James R.	Underhill, Isaac
Hanky, Ole A.	Moore, James F.	Vail, John
Halvorsen, John	Miers, George	Varnall, John H.
Halvorsen, Torger	Meador, Ezekiel E.	Williams, John
Halvorsen, Peter	Meyer, William	Wheeler, Silss
Husted, Phillip	Meyer, Casper	Wheeler, Harrison
Huff, D. D.	Miller, J. N.	Wilson, Justus
Hazlitt, Thomas J.	Nelson, G.	Yans, Anna

Perhaps it would be well to follow up the list of the first taxpayers with a list of the early settlers, so far as such is obtainable. Such a list is necessarily, in a great measure, a repetition of what has been given in previous chapters. Through the kindness of Mr. A. K. Bailey I am permitted the use of the old settlers' cards, taken as admission tickets at the door of Steyer's Opera House at the time of the organization of the Old Settlers' Association, July 4, 1876. It was the object of the inventor of this mode of gaining admission, not only to make the cards serve that purpose, but also to give a condensed history of each individual; and in order to serve this purpose, to the best advantage, printed cards, with blank spaces to fill, were used. The person gaining admission by this means was obliged to fill the blank spaces left for that purpose, and which, when filled, would give his age, when married, to whom and what year, and the date of his settlement in the county, as well as the number of the section on which he settled.

The following list of the very earliest settlers is quite complete:

Hamilton Campbell and his wife Sarah came to Winneshiek County



June 7, 1848, and settled on Sections 23-26, Bloomfield Township. Hamilton Campbell was born in 1802, and married in 1837.

Gotlob Krum and wife came to Winneshiek County on the 29th of June, 1848, and settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 17, in what is Washington Township.

Gotleib Krum, June 29, 1848, Washington.

David Reed and wife, settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 25, August 15, 1848, Bloomfield Township.

Daniel Reed settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 25, August 15, 1848, Bloomfield Township.

John N. Topliff settled on the S. E. Q. of Section 25, in Bloomfield Township, April 1, 1848.

Andrew Meyer and wife came to Winneshiek County on the 1st of April, 1849, and settled in Washington Township, on Section 23.

Phenenas Banning settled on the N. W. of N. W. Q. of Section 5, in what is now Bloomfield Township, in June, 1859.

William Day and Elizabeth, his wife, came to Winneshiek County and settled on what is now Decorah, on the 10th of June, 1849. John F. Day, same. Richard V. Day, same. Claibourne Day, same.

O. W. Emery came to Winneshiek County on the 20th of August, and settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 17, Canoe Township.

Josiah Goddard, Jr., October 10, 1849, Decorah.

The following are settlers who made a permanent settlement in the county in 1850 :

David Kinnison and his wife Henrietta, who settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 7.

John DeCow and his wife Mary D., who settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 1, in Bloomfield Township, June 29.

A. O. Lommen and his wife Seigie, who settled on the E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of N. W. Q. of Section 2, in Springfield Township, June 12.

Erick Anderson settled on the S. E. Q. of Section 24, Springfield Township, June 12.

A. K. Anderson came to Winneshiek County on the 20th of June, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 23, Springfield Township.

Tolef Simianson and his wife Betsy came to Winneshiek County July 2, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 1, Springfield Township.

Russel Dean, April, Bloomfield Township.

Ole G. Johnson settled on the S. W. Q. of Section 31, Glenwood Township, July 2.

Nelson Johnson and his wife Anna came to Winneshiek County on

the 2d of July, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 36, Decorah.

Orin Simmons came to Winneshiek County on the 3d of July, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 36, Decorah Township.

E. G. Opdahl came to Winneshiek County on the 4th of July, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 14, Springfield Township.

Albert Opdahl settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 14, Springfield Township, July 4th, and his wife, Mary H., settled on the N. W. Q. of the N. W. Q. of Section 13, Decorah Township, July 25.

John W. Holm came to Winneshiek County on the 30th of July, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 33, Canoe Township.

Benjamin L. Bisby came to Winneshiek County on the 1st of August, and settled on the S. W. Q. of Section 29, Hesper Township.

Peter K. Langland and his wife Emma, came to Winneshiek County in August, and settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 10, Pleasant Township.

John Evanson came to Winneshiek County on the 25th of September, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 32, Madison Township.

Christopher A. Estrim and his wife Juger Caroline, settled on the S. half of S. E. Q. of Section 5, on the 3d of September, Frankville.

John Fredenburg settled, the 20th of October, on the N. W. Q. of Section 6, Canoe Township.

William Padden and wife, settled the 25th of November, Section 28, Frankville township.

John Rosa, came to Winneshiek County with his father, and settled on Washington Prairie.

Jacob Duff, Frankville.

Edward Tracy, Decorah.

Walter Rathbun and his wife Welthie, came to Winneshiek County in March, and settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 16.

The following is a partial list of the pioneers who came to the county in 1851 :

E. C. Dunning and wife, settled on Section 16, Decorah Township, June 20th.

Geo. Blake, April, Bloomfield Township.

Russell Dean, April, Bloomfield Township.

E. E. Clement, Springfield, settled March 1, on the S. W. S. W. Q. of Section 1, Springfield Township.

D. D. Huff and his wife Anna, settled April 26, on the S. E. Q. of Section 29, Hesper Township.

Peter E. Haugen, came to Winneshiek County on the 12th of May, and settled on the N. W. Q. of Section 31, Decorah Township.

Simeon M. Leach and his wife, settled the 12th of May, on the S. W. Q. of Section 17, in Canoe Township.

A. V. Anderson and wife, Permelia, settled the first part of June, on the N. E. Q. of Section 24.

Torkel Hanson and his wife, Sophronia, came to Winneshiek County about the 15th day of June, and settled on the N. E. Q. of Section 25, Decorah Township.

Christopher Evans, settled the 15th of June, on the N. E. Q. of Section 32, Glenwood Township.

Iver G. Ringstad and wife, settled in Madison Township, on the 30th of June, on the S. half of Section 29.

Herbrand Onstine, settled in Madison Township.

Helge Nelson Myran, settled in Madison Township, on the S. W. S. W. Q. of Section 9.

Ole M. Asleson and wife, settled July 12, on the N. E. Q. of Section 8, in Madison Township.

William Birdsall and his wife, Mary, settled on Section 28, Frankville Township, on the 13th of August.

Gulbrand Erickson Wig, settled in September, on the S. E. Q. of Section 36, Madison Township.

Gulbrand T. Lommen, settled on Section 33, Decorah Township.

Ole Kittleson and wife, settled on Section 17, Decorah Township.

Philip Husted.

W. L. Iverson, Pleasant.

Isaac Birdsall, Frankville.

Ole Tolefson Wig, and his wife, Thora, settled on Section 31, Decorah Township.

George V. Puntey, settled on Section 30, Burr Oak Township.

A. K. Drake, Decorah.

Erick Olsen Bakke and wife, settled on Section 5, Frankville Township.

Nathan Drake, settled on Section 7, Glenwood Township.

Rolland Tobiason and wife, settled on Section 10, Springfield Township.

It cannot be claimed that this chapter is spicy, and it may not be as interesting to the general reader as those which have preceeded it; but for historical purposes it is one of the most important that could be given.



## CHAPTER V.

## POLITICAL HISTORY.

*County Organization—County Seat Struggle—First County Officers—  
Judge David Reed—Township Organization—The Election of 1852  
—First Representative—Hon. Jas. D. McKay—A. H. Fannon  
—Ninth Election—Results of the Various Elections down to 1854.*

There is no portion of history more difficult to write than the political history of a people. Especially is this so when the active participants in the various political struggles of the past are still living. Each one interested has an opinion of the issues of the contests in which he was engaged, and which are generally the opposite to those of his opponents. In interviewing many who buckled on the political armor in days gone by, I was astonished by the many strange versions given me, of political affairs of early days, and which, if published as told by the different authors, would furnish little more than a medley of contradiction. Such being the difficulty of gaining information, I refrain from entering into extended details concerning the various political contests that have agitated the county, and rest content with publishing the plain, historical facts, so far as ascertainable.

In order to do this acceptably, I shall quote quite extensively in this first chapter of political history, from an historical address delivered by Mr. A. K. Bailey, on the 4th of July, 1876, before the Old Settler's Association of Winneshiek County, at a meeting held in Steyer's Opera House.

In that address Mr. Bailey said:

"Five hundred and seventy pioneers in 1850! No wonder they were thinking of getting under the pale of the law. That winter some of the residents began to feel as though they were able to take upon themselves the dignity of an organized county. Judge Price, of Clayton, was up taking the census, for state purposes, the previous fall, and being the representative of this entire Northeastern Iowa, he offered to attend to the matter for them. Accordingly, January 15th, 1851, an organizing act was approved by the governor, and became a law. It constituted Winneshiek an organized county, and after March 1st, 1851, appointed John L. Carson the organizing sheriff, and directed him to set the stakes, one at, or near Louisville, on the Turkey River; another at, or near

Swainey's mill—meaning McSwain's—on the Turkey River ; and a third at, or near Decorah, on the Iowa River, as points that might contend for the location of the county seat, at an election to be held on the first Monday in April. On the first page of the first record of the county, I find this brief certificate as the only result :

STATE OF IOWA, }  
WINNESHIEK COUNTY. } I hereby certify that at an election held in the County of Winneshiek, and State of Iowa, on the 7th day of April, A. D. 1851, Decorah was duly elected to be the county seat of said county.

In testimony whereof, I have set my hand the 14th of April, 1851.

J. L. CARSON, *Organizing Sheriff*.

“This is all the record says, but there is a story behind it which has been told me under the strongest injunctions that it *must not* go into print. The county seat location has ever been the bone of contention and bitter strife in new counties, and Winneshiek was no exception. I may say that Decorah was not probably the choice of an actual majority of the settlers. Had all the votes been fairly polled, and especially had the election returns been correctly made, and properly certified to, Moneek would have unquestionably been chosen ; but why it was not so, is a story to be told ten, fifteen or twenty years hence. Decorah was legally designated, at any rate, and here the capital has remained until this day. But it has not been a peaceful abiding place. From that day until 1856 or 1857, the question of re-location was an ever present issue in individual schemings and all elections. It was the hidden spring behind all plans and outside appearances—the point of attack and defence. Moneek, it is true, soon gave up its claims, for its prosperity began to wane in 1852 or 1853. Louisville never got beyond a name, and a paper existence—if, indeed, it ever arrived at the latter stage—through the quarrels of its proprietors, Francis Rogers and Lewis Harkins. Both these embryo cities gave way for another rival, in the town of Freeport, where a few enterprising, pushing men had settled. This rivalry culminated in the year 1854.

“And this resulted in the passage of the law, which has ever since created much difficulty in the matter of a re-location of a county-seat. I refer to the law authorizing a vote on petition of a majority of the electors polled at the last preceding election. Under this law, in 1856 Freeport appeared as an applicant for a vote on re-location. In the fall before 420 votes were polled. Their petition was signed by 400 petitioners ; but it was met by a remonstrance bearing nearly 800 signa-



tures. The Court, our venerable friend Judge Reed, presiding, decided to grant no vote. The July following another petition of the same tenor was presented, it being signed by 451 names. Another remonstrance was forthcoming, signed by 715 persons. In both cases the petitions and remonstrances were certified to by affidavit as containing only names of actual residents. The last appeal met with a fate similar to the first. The case was removed to the District Court on a writ of *certiorari*, and was ended by a decision of Judge Murdock, affirming the decision of the County Court. In the following year the erection of the Court House at Decorah began, and Freeport gave up the struggle.

“Such is a short history of the selection of the county capital. I may add that perhaps at no time in the history of the county has there been any more desperate struggling or any harder work done than in the caucuses and elections which preceded and culminated in these contests. From the best information I can gain, I am strongly of the opinion that notwithstanding the affidavits as to actual citizenship which accompanied the petitions and remonstrances, Freeport labored under the disadvantage of being off the main line of immigration which was pouring in, and through to the West, as well as Minnesota. There are stories still told how money was used and promised, but from the best knowledge I can acquire, I think this is not true. If sharp practice was played, and “shenanigan” was used, we, to-day, looking back upon those times, cannot say that evil has come of it. The result was to prevent the county-seat from getting upon wheels; and when a settled conclusion was reached, the work of building up and improving began immediately, and has been pursued so steadily that every resident of Winneshiek feels it a matter of pride that his county town is excelled by no other of equal size in the entire State. He knows that it has a repute far and near as a bustling, enterprising, well-built manufacturing and commercial young city, situated in the center of a dense population, draining a section unrivaled for its agricultural wealth.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The question of organization was settled by the selection of a county seat, as we have seen. It remained to put in motion the machinery which should perfect the work. If I am rightfully informed, the residents came together some time in July following at the log cabin of Nelson Johnson, Esq., in the southeast corner of Decorah township, and held the first caucus. As a result of their deliberations, when election was held, on the fourth day of August ensuing, the following persons were chosen :

David Reed over J. R. Morse, as County Judge.

George Bachel over James F. More, as Sheriff.

Francis Rogers over William Vail, as Supervisor.

John N. Kline over R. G. Nuvland, as Surveyor.

Daniel Kuykendahl over P. Morse, as Recorder and Treasurer.

E. W. Aldrich over D. Bender, as Coroner.

Isaac Underhill, F. Joseph Huber and Joseph Brown served as Judges of Election, the first two certifying to the result as Justices of the Peace, whether by appointment, or as elected in the spring, is more than I can say; 82 ballots, all told, were cast, and Mr. Huber, still a citizen of Washington Township, is with us to-day to personally attest the validity and fairness of the first vote. In April following John McKay was elected School Fund Commissioner, and W. F. Kimball Clerk of the Courts. In my researches I almost came to the conclusion that salary-grabbing was not a latter-day invention, for, at the very first I found the Judge, Clerk and Treasurer coming together at stated intervals, each reporting the fees he had received, and dividing the them between themselves impartially. The Treasurer would then report the cash in the treasury, and this would also be divided with equal impartiality, and then the County Judge would issue county warrants to each one for the balance found due. This system, however, lasted only until taxes were levied and collected, and then ceased.

“David Reed was the first County Judge. He was born in June, 1799, and consequently was 52 years of age when first elected County Judge of Winneshiek County. His regular term of service covered four years—years, too, of the stormiest character, in which, as the autocrat of the county, he could share the responsibilities with no one, and shirk no duties. Of course his conduct was sharply criticised, and in his time he bore his share of public obloquy. Judge Reed held the office of County Judge by the suffrages of the people, continuously, from 1851 until 1855.

“We, at this day, would decide promptly, that at most only the vote of Bloomfield township should have been thrown out. The court decided to set aside the entire election, as to judge, and declared no one was elected. One of the assistants has explained to me, that instead of being satisfied with this, there were some who ‘cussed the court like pizen,’ because they did not declare the entire election void. The result was to continue Judge Reed in office for two years more, during which time he built and left as his legacy, the (for the times) splendid court house, which is only now becoming too cramped for public use.

“George Bachel, the first sheriff, is still an active, influential citizen of Jackson township. The duties of his office were not very burdensome, and he is to-day as hale as many a younger man.”

Francis Rogers, the first supervisor, was one of the oldest residents of the county, and was noted for the many litigations he had with his neighbors.

Daniel Kuykendahl, the first recorder and treasurer, had his office at his home, which was a log house situated under a bluff near a large spring, about a half a mile out of Freeport, on the Lansing road. The duties of his office at that time were not very arduous, and his mode of keeping the records was somewhat primitive. He had not even a decent desk at which to write. It was his custom to record his deeds, and then pigeon-hole them between the cracks in the logs.

Information in regard to the history of these first officers is very meagre.

The number of votes cast at these early elections is one of the best indices of the incoming of early settlers, and a few words will give these data. At that first election there were, as has been stated, 82 votes cast; in April following, there were 180; in August, 1852, 150; in April, 1853, 224; in 1854, 280; in 1855, 521; in 1856, 816; in August, 1857, 894; in October, 1858, 1,288; in the Presidential election of 1860, 2,162; in the Presidential election of 1876, 4,100.

We have seen that there were three distinct points recognized at the very commencement as having claims to prominence in the county. Polls were held for each of these three first elections at these places only, and they were called precincts. It was not until 1854 that even a single name appears on the records to show that any other title than that of precinct was given to them. March 8th, 1852, it was ordered by the county court that elections should be held in the ensuing April, at the following places:

In Precinct No. 1, at house of Wm. Day.

In Precinct No. 2, at house of Francis Rogers.

In Precinct No. 3, at house of John DeCow.

This is our only information as to the first division into what we have since known as townships. Their boundaries we can only infer from subsequent entries. In July, 1852, the division line between precincts 2 and 3 was changed, and made to run between ranges 7 and 8, thus throwing, as the record says, one more tier of townships into the third precinct. From this I infer that the 3d precinct originally consisted of what is now known as Bloomfield and Frankville townships, and was six



miles wide, east and west, and twelve long. Precinct No. 2 covered three times as much territory, and was eighteen miles wide, and twelve long. This left all the remainder of the county—now comprising twelve organized townships—in precinct No. 1. March 1, 1852, the latter was so divided as to make what is now Canoe, Bluffton and Orleans townships, with the townships north of them, precinct No. 4. February 5, 1854, what are now Military and Springfield were divided from Washington (now named for the first time) and created township (not precinct) No. 5.

March 6, 1854, Township 98, range 7, was separated from "Decorah Precinct," and was called Township No. 6. It is now known as Glenwood.

March 11, 1855, "Burr Oak Precinct" was divided, and the entire tier on the north line of the county was called Burr Oak. The remaining part of the precinct was named Canoe. At the same session of the county court, township 99, range 10, was set off and given the name of Pilot Grove.

On the tax list of 1855, proper names are given to each of those precincts. Precinct No. 1 had become Decorah, Glenwood, Canoe, Burr Oak and Pilot Grove; township No. 2 appears as Bloomfield and Summit (now Frankville), and No. 3 had been divided into Military and Washington; but no record other than I have quoted appears upon the court minutes as to these and subsequent changes. According to the tax lists, in 1856 Pleasant township took its name and place; in 1858 Summit had become Frankville, and Pilot Grove, Orleans; Springfield had been separated from Military, Calmar and Sumner from Washington, and Hesper and Fremont from Burr Oak. In 1860 Madison was taken from Decorah, and Highland divided from Pleasant; and in 1862 the symmetry of all the townships was completed by the division of Lincoln from Sumner, and Jackson from Washington.

The curious in matters of nomenclature might wish to pause here and ponder on the derivation of these names, but the space that speculations would occupy on this subject can be more profitably used otherwise, and I pass on to the several elections held in the county.

The second election held in the county after a permanent organization had been effected was, April 5, 1852. The total number of votes polled at this election was 180. This election, as the records show, gave the county its first School Fund Commissioner and District Clerk. The successful parties who first bore the honors of these offices were, respectively, N. S. Gilbert and W. F. Kimball. Out of 180 ballots



cast for School Fund Commissioner, N. S. Gilbert had 4 majority over his opponent, John D. McKay. There were 156 votes cast for the office of District Clerk, of which number W. F. Kimball received 88, and his opponent, James B. Schenck, 68. Kimball was declared elected by 20 majority. The vote for Coroner stood as follows: J. B. Chase had 66 votes, and his opponent, Wm. Painter, 44. James B. Chase was elected Coroner. At this election, for the first time, the new county helped elect a District Judge, and it showed its steadfast faith and high appreciation of Judge T. S. Wilson, by giving him 162 votes.

As a result of the third election, held in August, 1852, the following offices were filled :

M. B. Derrick was elected District Clerk by 18 majority. H. K. Averill was elected Surveyor. James D. McKay was elected Prosecuting Attorney by 29 majority.

James D. McKay was born in Livingston County, New York, on the 24th of February, 1815. Until 16 years of age he was taught the common branches of an education by his father, when he was sent to the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, situated at Lima, New York, to be fitted for the ministry. He also studied law under James Butler, a cousin of Gen. Butler. At the age of 21 he became acquainted with Julia Stone, to whom he was married September, 1836. He immigrated to Winneshiek County in October, 1851, and settled on the S. W. Q. of Section 15, Township 97, Range 7, where he still resides. He has served the public as Prosecuting Attorney and Member of the Assembly. In 1854, at a District Convention called at Waukon (the district then was composed of Allamakee and Winneshiek Counties) he was nominated for Representative, and elected. In the Legislature he favored the "Maine Liquor Law," which was adopted by the Iowa State Legislature. In this election he ran on the Republican ticket, which was successful, not only in the district, but throughout the State, so much so that the former power held by the Democrats was wrested from them. A Republican Governor was elected in the person of James W. Grimes, and a majority secured on a joint ballot in the General Assembly.

As a result of the fourth political contest, held in April, 1853, the following persons were chosen to fill the various offices :

Aaron Newell was elected for District Clerk, over his opponents, W. F. Kimball and N. S. Gilbert.

N. S. Gilbert was chosen as Recorder and Treasurer.

H. K. Averill was elected County Surveyor.

J. F. Moore was elected Drainage Commissioner.

A. H. Fannon was elected Coroner.

Acles Haven Fannon was born in Wythe County, Virginia, April 17, 1800. He settled at Freeport, Winneshiek County, in 1850, and laid out the town, and for several years engaged in tavern-keeping. He was the first mail contractor to carry the mails to Decorah. He contracted to carry the mails from Hardin to Decorah, from Decorah to Fort Atkinson, and from Lansing to Decorah. He was elected Coroner in 1875.

At an election held in Winneshiek County on the 1st of August, 1853, there were 175 ballots cast.

N. S. Gilbert was in the field for Recorder and Treasurer, without opposition, and was elected, there being only three scattering votes polled.

N. S. Gilbert, the second Recorder and Treasurer of the county, was an estimable young man, possessed of great energy. He was efficient, proud spirited, and decidedly the most shrewd man called upon in early days to administer county affairs; notwithstanding that he was freely accredited with the possession of all these qualifications, the tongue of scandal, soon after his induction into office, rolled him about as a sweet morsel to its taste.

James F. Moore was declared elected Sheriff, over Lewis Eddy and A. H. Fannon.

Elijah Middlebrook was elected County Surveyor. There was no opposition candidate for Surveyor.

Samuel Kendall was elected Coroner.

The newly elected Sheriff, James F. Moore, failed to qualify, and Judge Reed, therefore, declared the office vacant, and appointed Wm. F. Kimball to fill it.

Soon after the election the newly elected Recorder deserted the country, leaving the county without a Recorder and Treasurer. Judge Reed appointed Thos. I. Hazlett to fill the vacancy.

Mr. Gilbert was not a defaulter, nor did he desert his office intentionally, although at the time he left this was the current report. The additional crime of eloping with a Mrs. Moore, the Sheriff's wife, was charged to his account, and it is true that the parties left Decorah together, and afterwards went to St. Louis and lived as man and wife; yet at the time of their leaving Decorah, it is plain that there was no criminal intent or previous arrangement. It was in the spring of the year, and Mr. Gilbert, instead of intentionally deserting his office, went on a journey to St. Louis to purchase goods. Mrs. Moore was on her way

to friends in Wisconsin, and had started on the trip with the avowed purpose of leaving her husband. Mrs. Moore defended her course on the ground of ill treatment received at the hands of Mr. Moore. While at Lansing waiting for a steamer, they had occasion to hold a private conference, which was interpreted, by prying parties, as a criminal intimacy. The report, at the time unfounded and untruthful, was freely circulated. Mr. Gilbert having compassion for the woman, and being ashamed to return to his home, took her under his charge. Things had come to such a crisis that they now resolved to elope, and did so, going to St. Louis.

Nelson Burdick was elected Recorder and Treasurer, over N. Otis, by 102 majority.

James Van Pelt was elected Sheriff over A. H. Fannon, by 188 majority.

Henry K. Averill was elected Surveyor, and Phillip Morse, Coroner.

On the 1st of April, Aaron Newell resigned the office of Clerk of the District Court, and Nathaniel Otis was appointed to serve in his stead.

In the April election of 1856, there were 816 votes polled. The only officer elected was School Fund Commissioner. There were plenty of candidates in the field, willing to assume the responsibilities of this office, as the following list will show: J. E. B. Morgan, Elijah Middlebrook, J. P. McKinney and Thomas Bell. J. E. B. Morgan was elected to fill the office by 48 majority. This office was discontinued during Morgan's term.

At the April election in 1854, John McKay was re-elected School Fund Commissioner, over I. I. Stewart.

Elijah Middlebrook was elected Sheriff, by 20 majority, over James S. VanPelt.

Nelson Burdick was elected Recorder and Treasurer, over Wm. F. Kimball, by 73 majority. Mr. Burdick filled the office acceptably. He was continued in office until 1859.

Wm. Painter was elected Drainage Commissioner.



## CHAPTER VI.

## POLITICAL HISTORY.

*Levi Bullis—Sixth Election—Ezekiel E. Cooley—Eighth Election—Fudge Reed Holds Over—Ninth Election—Winneshiek's First Senator—Hon. J. T. Atkins—First Special Election—G. N. Holway—J. E. Simpson—Hon. H. C. Bulis—The County Supervisor System—Hon. G. R. Willett—A. K. Bailey—Hon. Knudt Berg—Hon. M. N. Johnson.*

The second chapter of the political history of the county commences with the spring election of 1854. At this age of the county, office began to be worth striving for. The county had increased wonderfully in population and wealth, and the force and energy of its hardy sons was fast developing its resources—so much so that it could afford to pay its public servants well for their services. At least, such is a logical supposition, as office-seekers were ever numerous and willing to serve the public. In May, of this year, came to the county and settled at its capital, a young lawyer, just in his prime, who for many years afterward wielded a strong political influence in county affairs.

Levi Bullis was born April 5, 1828, in West Plattsburg, New York. He lived in Plattsburg until 26 years of age, and there acquired his education. He early attended the Balston Springs Law School, and acquired a legal education. In 1853 Mr. Bullis left his old home and came to Illinois, where he remained about a year, when he was induced, by the flattering reports he received from Averill, an old schoolmate, to emigrate from there to Iowa. He reached Decorah May, 1854, and immediately commenced the practice of his profession. The first week after his arrival he tried a case and won it. Mr. Bullis was elected one of the original members of the Board of Supervisors in 1860. Although active in politics in the county, yet this is the only office he was ever elected to. It was his friends that he worked for in politics, and not himself, and not unfrequently have they succeeded through his instrumentality. Mr. Bullis is characterized with a rough exterior and a warm heart. He has aided more young men to position, and placed them on the road to success, than perhaps any other man in the county. He was married in 1864 to Abbie R. Dibble, of Whitehall, New York.



The many political contests that followed that of 1854 were waged by two parties known as the Bullis and Cooley factions. The parties were named thus because their recognized leaders were respectively Levi Bullis and E. E. Cooley. Many rich incidents could be told that took place in the contest that ensued under the dictatorship of these men.

At the sixth election, held in August, 1854, there were 262 votes cast for the office of State Representative, of which number James D. McKay received 194, and his opponent, Wm. H. Morrison, 68. James D. McKay was declared elected.

Aaron Newell was elected Clerk of the District Court over Daniel Carrier.

Albert B. Webber was elected Prosecuting Attorney over Calvin Farnsworth.

The newly-elected Prosecuting Attorney failed to qualify. The County Judge appointed Dryden Smith to fill the vacancy, and he, too, resigned. J. T. Atkins was appointed, accepted, and served through the term.

In the seventh political contest held in the county, April, 1855, a vote was taken on the prohibitory liquor law. The result stood as follows: for the law, 167; and against it, 169.

Hon. E. E. Cooley was elected Prosecuting Attorney, over Levi Bullis, J. B. Onstine and William Bailey.

Ezekiel E. Cooley was born in Victory, Cayuga County, New York, Jan. 12, 1827. He received an academic education, and at the age of 17 commenced teaching school, which occupation he followed five years. In 1847 he emigrated to Kentucky, where he taught, and read law with Judge Trimble, and was admitted to the bar in 1849. He returned to New York, and from there emigrated to Decorah, in October, 1854, where he has ever since continued the practice of his profession, with an exception of one year spent in the army.

In 1857 he was elected member of the first Legislature, under the new state constitution, and served with marked ability. He was appointed postmaster of Decorah, in 1861, and held the office until he resigned, in 1863. In September, 1864, President Lincoln appointed him commissary of subsistence, with the rank of Captain of cavalry. He was brevetted Major for meritorious conduct, and was honorably discharged in November, 1865. In 1868 and 1870, he was warmly supported by the Republicans of his county for the nomination to Congress, but the other counties of his district carried the majority for his competitor.

Mr. Cooley was married at Dubuque, in 1865, to Miss Jane<sup>e</sup>M. Rhodes, then of that city.

In the legal profession Mr. Cooley has few peers in Northern Iowa, and few have made themselves a better public and private record. He has ever had the interest of his city and county at heart, and has been identified with many of the enterprises that have proved beneficial to the community in which he has so long resided.

The eighth election was held on the 6th of August, 1855, and resulted in the choice of the following persons to fill the respective county offices:

In this election there were no less than five candidates for the office of County Judge. The canvassing board returned the following count: Joseph Gibbons had 205 votes for the office, while his opponents in the race had the following number of votes respectively: J. T. Atkins, 195; William Painter, 10; David Reed, 9, and N. Otis 1.

Joseph Gibbons received 10 more votes for the office than were cast for J. T. Atkins. But Jas. B. Cutler, in behalf of himself and others, contested the election. A court was formed to hear the case, Judge Reed presiding, with C. L. Childs and J. D. Jenkins assisting, by choice of the parties. A hot contest ensued; no less than twenty-seven witnesses being examined. The case was this: the trustees of Bloomfield township had changed the voting place from Moneek to Castalia, without giving the required legal notice. Thirteen persons were found who testified that they went to Moneek, as usual, to vote, and not hearing of the change, were unable to do so. They also swore that if they had voted it would have been in favor of J. T. Atkins as County Judge. The lawyers were heard, of course, and the whole case was gone over most profoundly. That an informality existed in the vote of that township was quite clear. Its effect upon the entire vote was the main question. We at this day would decide promptly, that at most only the vote of Bloomfield township should have been thrown out. The court decided to set aside the entire election, as to Judge, and no one was declared elected. One of the assistants has since explained, that instead of being satisfied with this, there were some who "cussed the court like pizen," because they did not declare the entire election void. The result was to continue Judge Reed in office for two years more, during which time he built and left as his legacy, the (for the times) splendid court house, which is only now becoming too cramped for public use.

L. Butler resigned the office of Liquor Agent on the 26th of June, 1856, to which office he had previously been appointed. The duties of this officer were to superintend the sale of liquors in the county, that is,

to see that no one trafficked in liquors except those who sold it for medicinal purposes.

Butler's resignation was accepted, and H. C. Bulis appointed to fill the vacancy, on the 30th of June, 1856. This office was discontinued at the expiration of his term.

The tenth election was held in August, 1856.

L. W. Griswold was elected Prosecuting Attorney, over S. A. Tupper.

Nathaniel Otis was elected Clerk of the District Court, over D. H. Hughes and G. W. Esty. Previous to this election the county had been organized into eleven voting precincts.

This election gave to Winneshiek County her first senatorial officer, in the person of J. T. Atkins.

At this date Winneshiek county was but a portion of the 34th Senatorial District, which was composed of the following counties: Winneshiek, Allamakee, Howard, Floyd and Mitchell. The total vote of this entire senatorial district was 2,331, of which number J. T. Atkins received 1,599, as against 716 for Edward Ellis, his opponent.

J. T. Atkins was born in Phillipstown, Worcester County, Mass., April 4, 1811. The early part of his life was spent in the Eastern States, where he followed steamboating as a vocation during the season when navigation was open, and taught school during the winter months. He received a common school education. Mr. Atkins immigrated to Indiana in 1835, where he commenced a real estate brokerage business. In 1851 there was much talk of the "new purchase" a part of which was Winneshiek county. The Judge contracted the fever, and came to Winneshiek County, Iowa, in the autumn of that year. Here he resumed his old business, that of land speculating, and also practiced law for several years, but not being a resident at the county seat, he concluded to abandon his profession and give his attention solely to his speculations.

October 19, 1854, he was appointed Prosecuting Attorney and Enrolling Officer, by Gov. Kirkwood. He was elected County Judge, at one time, but failed to qualify. In 1867 he was chosen to represent this county in the State Legislature.

The first special election was held on the 10th of October, 1856. The question at stake was whether the county should vote \$100,000 in aid of the Northwestern Railroad. There were 926 votes cast in favor of it, and 505 against.

The eleventh election was held in April, 1857, in which contest James B. Smith was elected to the office of Sheriff. George N. Holway was elected to the office of County Assessor.



George N. Holway was born in Sandwich, Mass., September 29, 1826. He received his education at Sandwich and Providence. He immigrated to Iowa in 1852, and made a permanent settlement at Hesper. He soon afterward became identified with the political affairs of the county. He was first elected County Assessor. He has been elected to the office of Treasurer, Supervisor and County Superintendent. In 1859 Mr. G. N. Holway was a candidate against Judge D. H. Hughes and L. D. Griswold. In this election he was barely defeated. Mr. Holway has done more, perhaps, than any other citizen, for the advancement of the educational interests of the county. The election of 1859 is noted as having been the most exciting political fight that ever disturbed the quiet of Winneshiek County. It was a struggle between the Cooley and Bullis factions for the supremacy. It was a bitter personal fight, and the atmosphere was laden with abusive personal attacks and vituperation.

James E. Simpson was elected to the office of Drainage Commissioner.

James E. Simpson was born in New York City, August 10, 1833. He received his education in the public schools of that State. He immigrated to Allamakee County in 1855. In that county he was engaged in teaching school and surveying until the summer of 1856, when he moved to Decorah, and that winter taught the public school of the latter place. That spring he was appointed Deputy County Surveyor, in which position he continued as Deputy and County Surveyor until 1860. In 1860 he was appointed Deputy Clerk under S. W. Paul. He was elected County Superintendent in 1861, which office he resigned to enter the United States service. He enlisted in Co. G, Twelfth Iowa Volunteers. He was made Orderly Sergeant, and promoted to Second Lieutenant. He resigned his lieutenantcy during the summer of 1862, on account of ill health. On his return home he again resumed the office of County Superintendent. In 1863 he was appointed Deputy Provost Marshal of Winneshiek County, which office he filled until he was mustered out of the service in 1865. In 1866 he was appointed United States Revenue Inspector of the Third Iowa District. In 1868 he was retained as one of the twenty-five United States Revenue Agents, and remained in the service until September, 1876. He was married to Mary A. Rankin, of Frankville, in July, 1860.

L. W. Griswold resigned the office of Prosecuting Attorney July 11, 1857. Dryden Smith was appointed to fill the office made vacant by Griswold's resignation, July 21, 1857, and was elected as Prosecuting



Attorney in the October election, 1857. The following winter, this office was abolished.

The next election was held August, 1857, at which there were 894 votes cast for County Judge. L. W. Griswold was the successful candidate for this office over S. A. Tupper.

J. B. Smith was re-elected Sheriff over E. M. Farnsworth.

Nelson Burdick was re-elected Recorder and Treasurer over J. Oleson.

L. W. Ludlow was elected County Surveyor over David Gorsuch.

Amos Hoag was elected Coroner over George Cooney.

There were 345 majority for the new State Constitution.

In the October election following, E. E. Cooley was elected State Representative by a majority of 512, over Wm. F. Kimball.

Dryden Smith was elected Prosecuting Attorney by 481 majority over S. A. Tupper.

Dryden Smith was an Indianian. He early came to the county, and figured quite prominently in political affairs.

The spring election of 1858 was held on the 14th of April. The only county officer elected in this contest was that of Superintendent of Public Instruction. It was the first officer of this character elected in the county, and H. C. Bulis was the man on whom this honor was conferred by the people.

Hon. H. C. Bulis was born in Chazy, Clinton County, New York, on the 14th of November, 1830. He studied medicine in Vermont, with Dr. A. C. Butler, and graduated at the Vermont Medical College, Woodstock, Vt. He came to Winneshiek County a young man, in October, 1854, and taught the first month of the second term of school that was taught in the village.

Politically the doctor was a strong Clay Whig, and latterly as ardent a Republican. Previous to his being elected County Superintendent he had been appointed commissioner for the sale of intoxicating liquors, by Judge Reed. At the expiration of his term this office was discontinued. He was next elected a member of the Board of Supervisors, and was made its president. In 1865 he was elected State Senator, and served his constituency four years in this capacity, during which time he was elected a trustee of the Iowa State University.

In 1869 he was returned to the State Senate. He served one year of his second term, during which time he was elected President *pro tem.* by the House of Representatives.

In 1871, he was elected Lieutenant Governor of the State. His thorough knowledge of parliamentary rules peculiarly fitted him for this

new responsibility. He discharged the duties of this office honorably, efficiently and faithfully.

In August, 1876, he was appointed by President Grant a member of the Indian Commission, whose duty it was to treat with the Sioux Indians for the purchase of the Black Hills territory. Dr. Bulis was absent five months on this mission. The object of the commission was, finally, successfully accomplished.

In the October election of 1858, there were 1,305 votes polled for Clerk of the District Court. S. W. Paul was declared elected to the office, over K. K. Buckman, by 190 majority.

James E. Simpson was elected County Surveyor, over David Gorsuch.

In the elections of 1859, the following officers were elected:

Erick Anderson, Sheriff; S. W. Matteson, Clerk; T. W. Burdick, Recorder and Treasurer; A. K. Averill, County Surveyor; John R. Howard, Coroner; W. F. Coleman, County Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In the fall election of 1860, which took place on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, S. W. Matteson was re-elected Clerk of the District Court.

In 1860 the County Supervisor system took the place of the County Judge regime, each organized township being represented in the Board by one representative. In 1870 this gave place, in turn, to what is really the commissioner system, but the officers were still called supervisors.

The following persons have filled these offices since that date: M. S. Drury, G. C. Winship and A. Arneson, elected in 1870. M. S. Drury was re-elected in 1872, and the number of members being increased to five, F. G. Hale and C. Sydow were elected at the same time.

F. Brittan was elected in 1873. Charles Meyers and G. C. Winship re-elected in 1874.

Peter Morton and Turner Callendar were elected in 1875, and H. Giesing was appointed to fill vacancy caused by the death of Charles Meyers.

In 1861 the following persons were elected to fill the various county offices:

M. V. Burdick, State Senator.

W. H. Baker and Ole Nelson, State Representatives.

Erick Anderson, re-elected Sheriff.

S. W. Matteson, re-elected clerk of the District Court.

T. W. Burdick, re-elected Treasurer and Recorder.

E. Baldwin, elected County Surveyor, which office he held continuously until 1869, being re-elected in 1863-5-7.

C. McKay, Coroner, which office he held until 1871, being re-elected in 1865-7-9.

In 1862 the following offices were filled by election and appointment:

S. W. Matteson, re-elected Clerk of the District Court, and re-elected in 1864.

H. C. Bulis, appointed County Superintendent.

J. M. Wedgwood elected County Superintendent October, 1862; re-elected in 1863-5-7-9.

T. W. Burdick resigned the Treasurership to enlist in the United States army, in 1862, and G. R. Willett was appointed to fill the vacancy made by the resignation.

Following is a list of the names of the men who have been elected to the office of State Senator:

H. C. Bulis, in 1865; re-elected in 1869; Dr. Bulis resigned in 1871.

Hon. G. R. Willett was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of H. C. Bulis, and was again elected to the office for four years in 1873.

Hon. G. R. Willett was born in Lacadie, Province of Quebec, November 11, 1826. Though born in Canada, yet both his parents were Americans. He spent the early part of his life in Canada, and received his education there. He studied law at Champlain, New York, and graduated at the Albany Law School. He was admitted to the bar in that city in 1856. He practiced law in Champlain until 1857, when he came west and settled in Decorah. He raised the first company of volunteers to fight for the Union, namely, Company D, Third Iowa Infantry. He was wounded in the knee in 1861, which so disabled him that he was obliged to resign and return home. In 1864 he was elected County Judge. During the winter of 1874 he was elected President *pro tem.* of the Senate. He was Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, and during the session of 1875 he was Chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He was also a member of the Committee on Railroads, Insurance and Judicial Districts. From 1868 to 1872 he was President of the Winneshiek Woolen Manufacturing Company. He was married at the age of 21 to Miss Alinda C. Kellogg, in Champlain, New York. Mr. Willett has occupied many high positions within the gift of the people, and has always discharged his trust honorably and faithfully. His legal ability is recognized abroad as well



as at home. As evidence of this fact, the reader is referred to his appointment as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

The following persons have been elected to represent the county in the State Legislature :

Knudt Bergh and Warren Danforth, 1871.

Knudt Bergh was born in Norway, and came to America when a boy, with his father, and settled in Highland township. Mr. Bergh early appreciated the value of an education, and strove with all his energy to attain the high place he afterward reached in educational circles. An adopted citizen, he became an American in all that the name implies. He was an exemplary man, and revered by all who knew him. In the legislative halls of the state he served his county with fairness and ability.

Mr. Bergh was a graduate of the University of St. Louis. He afterward became one of the professors in the Norwegian Lutheran College. His health failed him, and in 1873 he visited his native country, where he died of consumption, on the 16th of June, 1875, at Eide, Hardanger, Norway.

H. B. Williams, elected in 1864, to fill vacancy caused by the death of Ole Nelsen.

James B. Brown and H. B. Williams were elected in 1865.

H. B. Williams and J. T. Atkins were elected 1867.

H. B. Williams and O. A. Lomen were elected in 1869.

Warren Danforth and John DeCow, 1873.

Warren Danforth and M. N. Johnson, 1875.

M. N. Johnson, born in Racine County, Wisconsin, March 3, 1850, immigrated to Winneshiek County, Iowa, the same spring. He attended the public schools, fitted himself for college at the Upper Iowa University, and graduated in class '73, at the Iowa State University. He also graduated in the law class of '76, at the same institution. He entered politics in the fall of 1875, and was elected by the Republicans to the the State Legislature. He was elected Presidential elector in 1876.

The following persons have filled the office of Sheriff:

A. S. Skofstadt, elected 1867.

Knudt Thompson, elected 1869, and re-elected in 1871.

C. H. Hitchcock, elected 1873.

J. H. Womeldorf, elected 1875.

Dan Lawrence was elected Clerk of the District Court in 1866.

M. P. Hathway succeeded D. Lawrence, in 1868.



S. E. Tubbs succeeded M. P. Hathway, in 1870, and was re-elected in 1872.

A. W. Brownell was elected in 1874.

E. B. Hutchinson succeeded A. W. Brownell, in 1876.

The following persons have filled the office of County Treasurer for Winneshiek County :

A. K. Bailey, 1863.

G. N. Holway, 1865 and 1867.

G. T. Lomen, 1869 and 1871.

Edwin Klove, 1873, 1875, 1876.

A. K. Bailey was born Nov. 18, 1835, in Wales, New York. Wesley Bailey, his father, through his abolition principles, became publisher of a newspaper, with the avowed object of doing his share towards educating public opinion in the interests of the downtrodden slave.

A. K. Bailey, at thirteen years of age, entered his father's office as an apprentice. He acquired a thorough knowledge of the printer's trade, which has since proved invaluable to him as a publisher. He came to Decorah in March, 1860, and commenced the publication of the *Republican*, April 5, 1860, in partnership with his father. Mr. Bailey, as County Treasurer gave universal satisfaction, and filled his office with credit to himself and the county. In 1868, he was appointed Postmaster of Decorah, which official position he has ever since filled with efficiency. His position as publisher has compelled him to take an active part in politics. Mr. Bailey has many warm friends and some bitter enemies. His enemies, generally, are those who have been thwarted in political schemes. He is an honest, sympathetic, generous and benevolent christian. Mr. Bailey is a politician, not a schemer, and a man of strong character, whose word is its worth in gold.

In 1864, the Recorder's office was separated from the Treasurer's, and that same year John E. Powers was elected as the first independent Recorder. He was re-elected, 1866.

Cyrus McKay was elected Recorder in 1868, 1870 and 1871.

Chas. Steen succeeded C. McKay, in 1874, and was re-elected in 1876.

Henry Toye was elected County Superintendent in 1871.

G. N. Holway succeeded H. Toye, in 1873.

Nels Kessey was elected County Superintendent in 1875.

W. C. Adsit was elected Surveyor in 1869, 1871, 1873.

J. L. Cameron was elected in 1875.

F. W. Knox was elected Coroner in 1871; A. C. Ferran in 1873, and A. H. Fannon, 1875.

The political contest of 1876 deserves more than a mere mention in a work of this character. A complete history of this campaign, so far as participated in by Winneshiek County alone, would be sufficient to make a neat volume. The political campaign of 1876 gave to Winneshiek her first member in the National House of Representatives. This event alone entitles the Centennial political struggle to more than a passing notice.

The honored son on whom this distinction was bestowed was Hon. T. W. Burdick. The office sought the man, and not the man the office. Unknown to him, his friends in the County Convention nominated him as Winneshiek's favorite for Congressional honors, and sent a solid delegation to the Congressional Convention, instructed to vote for T. W. Burdick. The Congressional Convention was held at McGregor, September 6, 1876. Mr. Burdick went into the Convention supported by only the nineteen delegates sent from Winneshiek County, but these nineteen stood by him, first and last, until, on the twenty-second ballot, the unanimous vote of the Convention gave him the nomination for Congress, amidst cheers and great excitement. Two years before a Democrat had been elected to Congress, and the district was known to be close. The contest that followed was perhaps the fiercest ever waged in the district.

The Democrats had nominated J. M. Griffith, of Dubuque, who, being wealthy, could contest the ground more advantageously than any other member of his party eligible for the place. He fought his battles with the fierceness of desperation. Money was lavishly spent, and no doubt advantageously. Yet Mr. Burdick was elected by the round majority of 1,267. Winneshiek headed the list of all the Republican counties in the district by giving him 1265 majority.

Appended is a sketch of his life, written the year before his nomination, and published in Andreas' Atlas:

"Theodore W. Burdick, cashier of the First National and Savings Banks of Decorah, is a native of Pennsylvania, born October 7, 1836. He removed with his parents to Winneshiek County at the age of 17, having previously acquired a good English education, his father having intended him for a collegiate course at Oberlin. The removal to the west, however, interfered with that arrangement, and on their arrival at Decorah, in the spring of 1853, he was employed as the first school teacher in the place, the first school-house having just then been

completed. The following spring his father was elected County Treasurer, and he took charge of the office and also that of County Recorder, discharging practically the duties of both until he became of age, in 1857. At the next election following he was elected County Treasurer, and filled the office in a most faithful and satisfactory manner till 1862, when he resigned to enter the army. He was commissioned Captain of Company D, Sixth Iowa Volunteer Cavalry, in which capacity he served for three years—till 1865. Four brothers besides himself were in the army, and three of them lost their lives in their country's service. On his return from the army Mr. Burdick purchased an interest in the First National Bank of Decorah, of which he was elected Cashier in 1866. Since the war he has held no public office, but has devoted himself exclusively to business. Both in his public and private relations, for a period of over twenty years, since he became a citizen of Decorah, he has been noted as a gentleman of honor and integrity, of good business talents and irreproachable character."

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## CHAPTER VII.

### MILITARY HISTORY.

*The Alarm of War—Patriotic Meeting of Citizens—Organization of the First Company—Miss Carrie McNair—Battle of Blue Mills—Lieut. Anderson—Battle of Hatchie—List of Killed and Wounded—Battle of Shiloh—List of Killed and Wounded of Company D—Capt. E. I. Weisner—Surrender of Vicksburg—A Disastrous Charge—Lieut. McMurtrie—Lieut. C. W. Burdick—The Battle of Atlanta—The Third Iowa Fights Itself to Death.*

On the 20th of April, 1861, just six days after the booming of cannon, heard at Sumter, had sounded the alarm of civil war, a meeting of the patriotic citizens of Winneshiek County, and Decorah in particular, was held in the Court House. It was held for the purpose of giving expression to the outraged feelings of a liberty-loving people at the atrocious stroke made against human freedom and American liberty, and to declare their adhesion to the old flag that waved from the Court House dome above them.



The meeting was called to order, and Capt. John H. Simpson made Chairman. This distinction was paid the aged gentleman because of his efficiency in commanding and his co-operation with the first militia company ever organized in Decorah.

Capt. John H. Simpson was born in Ganston, England, March 22, 1796, and died at Decorah July 2, 1869. He had been a member of the Royal Life Guards (Body Guard of the King) and as one of the battalion, was on his way to the field when the battle of Waterloo was fought. In 1828 he came to America and settled in New York City. He came to Decorah in 1850, and here for thirteen years he lived an honest, blameless life. He was elected Captain of the Decorah Guards on the formation of the company in 1859.

There are men yet living in Winneshiek County who remember the memorable meeting over which he presided, and how his patriotism gave vent, in the greatest effort of his life, in a patriotic speech that sent the blood tingling through the veins of every listener. In this speech he tendered the remainder of his life for the defence of his country, though the snows of sixty-five winters rested on his brow. He was not accepted. Younger men, with stronger sinews and harder muscles, volunteered their services.

But one week intervened before there was a reorganization of the Decorah Guards, and men better fitted for the hardships of a soldier's life superceeded the members of the original company. The Decorah Guards, as they originally were, underwent a complete transformation, only three of the old company being retained in the ranks of the new organization. The old officers resigned, and new ones were elected. This was the first company of men in Winneshiek County to enlist in defence of the Stars and Stripes. They were men in the full vigor of life, men of sterling worth, the very flower of our young county, as the following summary of the company indicates: The oldest men in the company (two of them) were aged 36, one 34, one 32, one 31, one 30, one 29, two 28, three 27, three 26, six 25, eight 24, seven 23, ten 22, nine 21, nine 20, eleven 19, ten 18, making a total of officers and men of 85, with an average of 22 years, 8 months and 22 days.

The company was known as the Decorah Guards, until mustered into the service; then they assumed the name of Company D, Third Regiment of Iowa Volunteers. The officers of the new company were:

*Captain*—G. R. Willett.

*First Lieutenant*—Emilius I. Weiser.

*Second Lieutenant*—Ole A. Anderson.



*Orderly Sergeant*—George McKay.

*Second Sergeant*—A. H. McMurtrie.

*Third Sergeant*—C. W. Burdick.

*Fourth Sergeant*—Robert Ray.

*First Corporal*—E. M. Farnsworth.

*Second Corporal*—Milton Ross.

*Third Corporal*—Charles P. Brown.

*Fourth Corporal*—Joseph S. Neff.

This company was enrolled in Winneshiek County, and ordered into quarters by the Governor of the State May 21, 1861. The company left Decorah for Keokuk, their rendezvous, May 28, 1861, and was mustered into the United States service June 10, 1861. The date of the company's departure from Decorah for the scenes of war will remain a memorable one in the recollection of the hundreds of citizens who met on Court House Square to bid the boys a last farewell. The ladies had prepared a beautiful flag, which was presented to the company by Miss Carrie McNair, whom I feel compelled to more than casually mention; and in order to do so I shall be obliged to digress from the main subject.

Carrie McNair was born in Livingston County, N. Y., about the year 1832. She came to Decorah in the year 1860, at that period in our national existence when the very atmosphere was deadened with treasonable imprecations against the Union, and when the cloud of rebellion had so spread its mammoth proportions as to nearly obscure the bright sunlight of freedom. Being a woman of strong emotional nature, a lover of liberty and union, she early identified herself with the Union side of the controversy that then threatened a separation of states; consequently, out of respect and appreciation of her noble nature, and her sympathy with the Union, she was chosen, of all other women, better fitted to make the presentation. In 1862, following the many bloody battles, and not infrequent disastrous engagements, Miss McNair felt that there was need of her services in the crowded hospitals. With a heartfelt desire to render the Union any service in her power, and an anxiety and willingness to alleviate the sufferings of brave men who had fallen wounded in their country's cause, she became a nurse in a soldiers' hospital at St. Louis. She served in this capacity until the end of the war, and furnished aid and comfort to thousands of poor unfortunates.

Following the presentation of the flag, there was a presentation of Bibles and Testaments. The scene was such as never had occurred before, and was solemn, impressive and trying.

The Company, in vehicles, pursued their course to McGregor, and from thence to Keokuk, and from here, soon after, they were transported to scenes of active service, in Missouri.

The first hard fought battle that the Company engaged in was at Blue Mills, Sept. 7, 1861, although previous to this they had been engaged in many hotly contested skirmishes. In the battle of Blue Mills the Unionists were driven back.

Wm. B. Miller, of Company D, was killed in this engagement, and Capt. Willett, Second Lieut. Ole Anderson, and private Wm. B. Heckert, were seriously wounded. Capt. Willett's wound occasioned his resignation, and the promotion of Lieut. E. I. Weiser to the captaincy of the Company.

Lieut. Anderson fell, wounded in the temple, and was left on the field for dead. Company D having been obliged to retreat, he fell into the enemy's hands. His body was stripped of all its clothing but his pants, and he was robbed of everything by the rebels. The next day after the battle the rebels were obliged to retreat, and then Company D reclaimed his body. Lieut. Anderson lay unconscious three weeks, and it was a question for a long time afterwards whether he would survive or not. He entered the army a perfect athlete, and a perfect man, physically and mentally, and to-day, from the effect of that wound, incurred at the cost of duty and bravery, he is a mere wreck of his former self. As an officer he was efficient and brave to a fault.

The battle of Shiloh, fought on the 6th and 7th of April, 1862, was the next great conflict in which Company D participated. Under the hottest fire and amid the most trying scenes, Company D behaved itself with coolness and bravery. After passing through that fiery ordeal, a summary of the loss it sustained showed the following: Killed—Edward Knapp, Hans H. Stenson and Samuel D. Smith. Wounded—Capt. E. I. Weiser, Corp. J. H. Farber, Geo. H. Culver, Jas. S. Daskam, Hans Gulbrandson, Thos. Heath, Peter B. Hulverson, Knudt Knudson, Matthew Kellogg, Gilbert Knudson, Henry H. Sheldso, Geo. H. Kelly, John Jas. Fisher, Hiram S. Daskam.

The battle of Hatchie, fought on the 5th of October, was the scene of the next hotly contested engagement in which Company D took an active part.

The Company lost the following: Wounded—Capt. E. I. Weiser, Corp. C. C. Watson, Geo. Culver, Martin E. Oleson (mortally), and Martin Pepper.

In the battle of Hatchie the second Captain of Company D was made incapable for active service by a rebel bullet.

Captain E. I. Weiser was born in York, Pa., April 10, 1835, and emigrated from the place of his nativity to Decorah, in 1856. Being possessed with a warm heart and genial nature, and a patriotic love of country, the threats of war against the Union aroused his impulsive nature to a desire to make any sacrifice—hardship, suffering, even life itself—in his country's cause. As a result, when the first cry of a distressed country was heard, calling on her sons for protection against the assaults of traitors, Capt. E. I. Weiser was the first and foremost of her patriots in Winneshiek County to respond. Capt. E. I. Weiser was the first man to enlist from Winneshiek County in his country's service, in the late civil war. He enlisted as a high private in Company D, and was elected First Lieutenant at the first election held by the Company.

Capt. E. I. Weiser participated in many warm skirmishes and two hard-fought battles. He was wounded at Shiloh; also at Hatchie, on the 5th of October, 1862. The wound he received at Hatchie disabled him from further active military service during the war. Eight months he was detained in the hospital by his wound, and seven of these eight months he was compelled to lie in one position—on his back. He was with his company one week while it was at Memphis. While here the boys of Company D presented him with a silver pitcher, as a mark of their regard and the appreciation they had for him as a soldier and commander. Capt. Weiser was brave, cool, efficient, and possessed all the noble attributes requisite in a successful commander. His physical disability is a glorious certificate of his bravery.

Company D next went to Memphis, where it remained six months, and from thence to Vicksburg. They were engaged in the siege of Vicksburg up to the date of its surrender. Vicksburg surrendered July 4, 1863. The white flag was raised on every fort at 9 A. M. on the 3d. The rebels sent out a flag of truce, and wished to surrender on conditions. Gen. Grant sent back word that nothing but an unconditional surrender would be accepted. On the 3d, when the white flags were hoisted, all firing ceased. The rebels came outside of their works, and held a sociable with our boys. On the 4th of July, at 10 A. M., the rebels marched outside of their works, were drawn up in line, and stacked their arms, and promptly at 11 A. M. the Stars and Stripes proudly floated over the rebel works.

In this siege, on the 26th of June, Thomas Kelly, of Company D,



was mortally wounded. He lived about a week, having won, in dying, the honor of being the bravest among the brave.

The Third Regiment received orders on the 5th to take up their line of march for Black River, to look after Johnston, who, with a large force, had been prowling in the rear. On the 12th of July, 1863, about 225 men of the Third Iowa, among which number were many of Company D, made an assault on rebel works, behind which were ensconced about 10,000 of Johnston's men. The result of this assault was a whirlwind of death. In the first volley fired by the enemy 125 out of the original 225 were almost instantly mowed down. There were about 800 men engaged, but 225 that ventured right into the jaws of this fiery hell. The commander in charge was immediately relieved of command.

On the 7th of July Johnson evacuated Jackson, the scene of the last engagement, and here, in rebel hospitals, were found the wounded who had survived the disastrous charge of the 12th inst. Among the number was Lieut. McMurtrie, who had both legs broken by rebel shots. His right leg had been wounded with a piece of shell, and was so badly shattered that amputation was necessary. The left leg had been broken by a minie ball.

It was found necessary, on the 21st of July, to remove the wounded to Vicksburg. The journey had to be made in ambulances. Lieut. McMurtrie was among the unfortunates that had to submit to the removal. Words cannot express the suffering this trip entailed upon him in his weakened condition.

On the 23d he was placed on a hospital boat to be sent north, but died before the boat left the wharf, at 2 P. M., July 25, 1873.

Lieut. A. McMurtrie was born at Homer, Michigan, June 30, 1837. He came to Iowa in 1856. He was promoted First Lieutenant of Company D, May 21, 1862.

Lieut. McMurtrie was endowed with a great moral character, which lost none of its noble attributes by his army career. He died a brave soldier, lamented by his comrades in arms and all who knew him.

C. W. Burdick was promoted First Lieutenant, to fill the vacancy caused by Lieut. McMurtrie's death, which post of duty he held from that time until his three years enlistment had expired. At this time Lieut. Burdick was the only commissioned officer in the company. During three years' service, Lieut. Burdick was off duty but twelve days. He took an active part in every skirmish and battle in which his company was engaged, and was never touched by an enemy's fire. Few



men, and I doubt if any, in Iowa can show a better record than this.

The engagement at Jackson was the last of any note in which Company D took an active part. The time of enlistment of Company D expired on the 10th of June, 1864. The Company was stationed at Kingston, Georgia. All that did not re-enlist, started home to be mustered out of the service. Many of the boys remained. At the memorable battle of Atlanta, fought July 22, 1864, the Third Iowa literally fought itself to death.

The boys of the third and Company D went into this battle with that Spartan valor that had characterized them, individually and collectively, in many a hard fought engagement. As the battle grew raging hot and desperate, a handful of our undaunted men, among whom were a remnant of Company D, gathered amidst the pelting shower of shot and shell, and there around our flag and banner they stood its guard in the most perilous moments. The color-bearer, the bravest of the brave, relinquished his hold by death alone. Still the mass stood there fighting madly for its defence. Their number fast decreasing by death, their hopes began to fail, and, as they surrendered themselves to the enemy, they tore the emblem of our nationality, and regimental designation, into pieces and into shreds, which concealed, they proudly brought back to us, untouched and unsoiled by impious and traitorous hands.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MILITARY HISTORY.

*Company H—Camp Life—On the March—Named the “Iowa Grey Hounds”—Receives its Baptismal Fire at Pea Ridge—Storming Rifle Pits and Batteries—The March to the Sea—It had its Average Number of Bummers—The Loss Sustained by Company H—O. M. Bliss—A Tribute of Valor by the Ladies of Boston—Company G Enrolled—The Battles in which it Participated—Death of Captain C. C. Tupper—Promotion of Lieut. Townsley—Lieut. Nickerson—Sergt. A. A. Burdick—Nelson B. Burdick—Winneshiek County Contributes Three Additional Companies—Companies D, K and E—A History of their Maneuvers—Their Ranks are Thinned by Disease—Death of Col. D. H. Hughes—The Thirty-Eighth and Thirty-Fourth are Consolidated—It takes part in the Last Battle of The War—A Short Sketch of Company D, Sixth Iowa Cavalry.*

Company H, Ninth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, was organized at Decorah, in the months of August and September, 1861, and was mustered into service at Dubuque, on the 24th of September, the same year.

After remaining at Camp Union, Dubuque, until the middle of October, the Regiment was sent to St. Louis, and went into camp at Benton Barracks. A few weeks were passed in the usual routine of camp duty, when the regiment was ordered to Pacific City, Missouri, and passed some little time in guarding railroads and arresting guerillas. During this time the regiment was perfecting its discipline; and the diseases incidental to the climate and season, joined to the hardships of camp life, were thinning the ranks of all men who were deficient in physical vigor.

When the expedition against Price was organized, the Ninth was ordered to Rolla, Mo., and after a week spent in camp at that place, started on the march for Springfield. The march was made in winter, and the crossing of the Gasconade, the roads knee-deep in mud, and the cold, inclement weather tested the endurance of the men, and when the regiment was placed in the advance, after the capture of Springfield, it earned its title, “The Iowa Greyhounds,” by marching 135 miles in four days in the pursuit of Price. Company H received its “baptism of fire” at Pea Ridge, and the day before the fight

marched forty miles on a half-pint of corn-meal to the man. It mustered fifty-two men when the fight opened; twenty-two were unwounded at the close of the struggle.

On that field the boys, most of them beardless, who six months before were laboring on farms and in workshops, showed themselves able to defeat the practiced riflemen of Missouri and Arkansas, the Rangers of Texas, and the trained regiments of Louisiana.

The march across Arkansas, in the summer of 1862, followed the conflict at Pea Ridge. Some time was passed in camp Helena, and in December the regiment took part in the first attack on Vicksburg. The expedition up the dark Yazoo, and its unfortunate results, were amply avenged at Arkansas Post, January 10, 1863.

In all the operations that culminated in the capture of Vicksburg the Ninth was actively engaged—from digging in the canal to storming rifle-pits and batteries. And in the charge on the 22d of May, Company H lost eighteen men killed and wounded out of a total of twenty-six men in action, and of these nine were killed on the field or mortally wounded. From Vicksburg to Jackson, thence back to Vicksburg, up the river to Memphis, thence to Tuscumbia, where a severe conflict took place, then up the sides of Lookout Mountain, under the lead of Osterhaus, followed by a rapid pursuit of the routed foe, and the fight at Ringgold, is a brief outline of the work Company H took part in during 1863. The majority of the company re-enlisted as veterans, and after their return from furlough the boys found themselves a part of the mighty host Sherman was about to lead “to the sea.”

For seventy days from the opening of this memorable campaign the members of Company H who participated in the operations, were constantly under fire, with perhaps a slight intermission prior to the crossing of the Chattahooche. The fights at Resacca, New Hope Church, Burnt Hickory and Kenesaw Mountain, showed the valor and discipline of the Ninth. On the 22d of July the Ninth was one of the Iowa regiments that, under the eye of Sherman, recaptured the battery of DeGress, and drove the rebels, at the bayonets' point, from the entrenched line they had wrested from the loyalists. At Ezra's Church, on the 28th of July, and at Jonesboro, where the fate of Atlanta was decided, the boys of Company H were actively engaged.

After the capture of Atlanta and the pursuit of Hood, who was left to the “tender mercies” of Thomas, the boys followed Sherman to the sea, and Company H furnished its full quota of able and accomplished “bummers.” From Savannah the company marched through the



Carolinas, taking part in any "little unpleasantness" that came in the way, and actively participating in the closing fight at Bentonville. After resting a few days at Raleigh, the regiment marched to Washington and took part in the "Grand Review," and was shortly after mustered out of the service at Louisville, Ky.

That Company H did its whole duty, the following figures, taken from the Adjutant General's Report, prove:

Company H, 9th Iowa—Total killed and wounded.....	53
Total killed and died of wounds.....	19
Company D, 3d Iowa—Total killed and wounded.....	33
Total killed and died of wounds.....	9
Company G, 12th Iowa—Total killed and wounded.....	9
Total killed and died of wounds.....	4
Company E, 38th Iowa—Total killed and wounded.....	0
Company K, 38th Iowa—Total killed and wounded.....	1
Total killed and died of wounds .....	1
Company D, 38th Iowa—Total killed and wounded .....	1
Total killed and died of wounds.....	1

The above table shows the extent of the loss sustained by Company H in battle, as compared with the reported losses of the other companies organized in this county from the same cause. I do not think the above figures do full justice to Companies E, K and D, Thirty-Eighth Iowa, for no regiment organized in the country suffered to such an extent by disease. Stationed in localities where to breathe the air was to inhale death, the boys of Company E, D and K performed their allotted duty, sustained by naught save the feeling of patriotism, and faced death uncheered by "the shout of victory, the rapture of the strife."

Died of disease :

Company D, 3d Iowa.....	10
H, 9th Iowa .....	15
G, 12th Iowa .....	17
E, 38th Iowa .....	34
D, 38th Iowa .....	37
K, 38th Iowa .....	37

Company H, at the time it was mustered in, was commanded by M. A. Moore, who achieved no particular distinction. He resigned in the spring of 1863, and was succeeded by O. M. Bliss, who enlisted as a



private and secured promotion by meritorious services. Capt. Bliss was as true a soldier as ever drew a sword. Brave, earnest and patriotic, he "dared to lead where any dared to follow." After facing death on twenty fields he died from injuries received by a fall from his horse while acting as Major after the capture of Atlanta. J. H. Phillips succeeded to the captaincy, and commanded the company until its service was ended.

In writing this brief sketch of the career of Company H, embracing a period of nearly four years, and services performed in eight States, from the Ozark Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, a hundred incidents and memories crowd on the mind that space will not permit me to relate. Nearly sixteen years have elapsed since "we took the oath of muster with right hand raised to heaven," and, in looking back, the boys of Company H will instinctively date their memory of army life from the bitter, persistent struggle in the wild ravines of the Ozark, where their first blood was shed. And during all subsequent campaigning, Pea Ridge was the standard whereby to measure the severity of the conflict. And the boys of the Ninth will ever remember, with proud gratification, the tribute their valor received from the ladies of Boston—a stand of colors emblazoned with the name of their fiercest battle.

The third company raised in the county was the one that became Company G, Twelfth Iowa. It was enrolled at Decorah in September, 1861, ordered into quarters at Dubuque, September 30, and mustered into the United States service November 5, 1861. It was officered as follows:

*Captain*—C. C. Tupper.

*First Lieutenant*—L. D. Townsley.

*Second Lieutenant*—J. F. Nickerson.

*Orderly Sergeant*—J. E. Simpson.

The company became a portion of the regiment from the date of its muster in, and from that time on until disbanded always acted well its part. Company G was noted in its regiment for its excellent moral status and soldierly efficiency. It saw hard service, and took an active part in the following hotly-contested battles: Fort Henry, Fort Donaldson, Shiloh, siege of Corinth, Corinth, Jackson, Vicksburg, Jackson siege and capture, Brandon, Tupelo, Nashville, and Brentwood Hill. Besides these battles, the company did excellent service as skirmishers. The company early met with a severe loss in the death of its first captain, C. C. Tupper.

Capt. C. C. Tupper was born at Auburn, New York, December 24,

1832, and came to Decorah in May, 1857. He had received a liberal education, and prior to taking a residence in Iowa had served as agent of the Associated Press and local manager of the telegraph offices at Buffalo and St. Louis. He was admitted to the bar soon after his arrival, but for a brief time edited the *Decorah Journal*, a Democratic newspaper. When the war broke out he took an active and intensely patriotic interest in every movement. Military life was always attractive to him, and he was unusually well versed in the manual of arms. He assisted in organizing the two companies from Winneshiek County that found place in the Third and Ninth regiments, and helped prepare them for the field. When it became evident that a third company must be drawn from the county, all eyes turned toward Capt. Tupper to take its lead. Although of a frail constitution, and physically unfitted for the severe trials of army life, his patriotism overrode all prudence, and he consented. The company was rapidly recruited, and assigned to the Twelfth Regiment of Iowa Volunteers. But Capt. Tupper's association with the company was only a brief one. He was idolized by his men, beloved by all his associate officers, and thoroughly respected by his superiors. But these could not protect and defend him from disease and death. While going from Dubuque to St. Louis with the regiment he caught a severe cold, and in six weeks died at Benton Barracks, in St. Louis, a victim of capillary bronchitis. In this death the terrible evils of war were first brought directly home to the community of which he had been a member. He had been the leader in its best social circles, the active abettor of every public enterprise, and his death carried sadness and mourning to almost every household in the county. Of friends who mourned his death there were scores upon scores; of enemies, none.

The sad event narrated above necessitated the promotion of Lieut. L. D. Townsley to the captaincy of the company, which office he held until mustered out of the service, November 25, 1864. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Shiloh, in which engagement he sustained a severe wound in the left arm, and suffered with the rest of his brother officers the hardships of prison life. After his exchange he was often employed in important detached duties, which he always filled with credit to himself and country. He served out his entire term of service, and is now residing in Chicago.

Lieut. J. F. Nickerson was made First Lieutenant, and was stunned at the battle of Fort Donelson with what was supposed to be a solid shot from the enemy's batteries. From this he never recovered, was

sick and ill the morning of the Shiloh fight, but persisted in going out with his company to the front, was taken prisoner, and died in rebel prison at Montgomery, Ala., May 31, 1862. Kind but firm, a noble, brave man, beloved by his friends and all who knew him, a martyr to the cause.

Orderly Sergeant J. E. Simpson was promoted to be Second Lieutenant, but resigned on account of ill-health in 1862, and is now living in Decorah.

A. A. Burdick, Second Sergeant, was made Orderly and then First Lieutenant, and was killed at the battle of Tupelo, July 14, 1864. He was the Quartermaster of the regiment, and had been ordered to the rear with his train; but after seeing his wagons properly "parked" he came to the front, and volunteered to assist in bringing forward ammunition. While thus engaged he was struck by a shell and instantly killed. He died as a soldier would wish to die, with his face to the enemy and in the heat of battle. Lamented and mourned by all who knew him, no better man or braver soldier ever offered up his life that his country might be saved.

Anton E. Anderson, Third Sergeant, became Second Lieutenant, served with credit to himself until mustered out, at expiration of term of service, December, 1864, and died at his farm, some years after the war, near Eldorado, Iowa.

Robert A. Gibson, Fifth Sergeant, became Orderly Sergeant March 27, 1863, was promoted to First Lieutenant December 2, 1864, became Captain of his company January 23, 1865, and for a time was Captain and Provost Marshal at Selma, Ala., and served with great credit to himself to the end of the war. He was then appointed Second Lieutenant in the regular army, and was killed by the accidental discharge of a pistol at Fort Randall in 1867.

Jacob H. Womeldorf, First Corporal, became Fifth Sergeant, was taken prisoner with his company at Shiloh; was held prisoner for some time, and suffered great hardships that so broke down his health as to compel him to return home in 1863. He is now Sheriff of Winneshiek County.

Nelson B. Burdick was Eighth Corporal, and but a youth at school when he went into the service. He contracted the measles at Benton Barracks, and was never well afterwards. He took part in the battles of Fort Henry, Donelson and Shiloh. Warm-hearted, generous towards all, he became a universal favorite. The hardships endured in



rebel prisons were too much for his impaired frame. He reached home and died among his friends.

“He has fought his last battle ;  
No sound can awake him to glory again.”

John Steen, private, became Quartermaster Sergeant in 1864, and his whole term of service to the end was marked with ability and efficiency. Since the war he has held several positions of responsibility and trust, and is now living at Fremont, Neb.

The regiment was ordered to Davenport for final pay and discharge January 25, 1866.

In 1863 Winneshiek County again came to the front and contributed, for the suppression of the rebellion, three companies in addition to the brave men she had before sent. These companies were, respectively, D, K, and E, and formed a part of the Thirty-Eighth Regiment. Henry A. Cleghorn was Captain of Company E.

Company K was officered as follows :

*Captain*—Samuel B. Califf.

*First Lieutenant*—Levi Freeman.

The officers of Company D were :

*Captain*—George R. Humphreys.

*First Lieutenant*—Newton Richards.

*Second Lieutenant*—E. J. Barker.

These companies were mustered into service at Camp Randall, Dubuque, Iowa. From here they were transferred to Benton Barracks, St. Louis, Mo., where they spent Christmas and New Years, 1863-4. They were next transferred to Fort Thompson, which they retained charge of nearly six months.

The Thirty-Eighth Regiment was next transferred to the main forces then besieging Vicksburg. In this siege the Thirty-Eighth, including the three companies from Winneshiek County, formed the extreme left of the Union line. Their position was in the very heart of a malarious swamp, and here was contracted the germ of a disease which afterwards carried off these brave men by the hundreds. Within ten days after the surrender of Vicksburg the Thirty-Eighth were ordered to Yazoo City, on the Yazoo River. At Yazoo City the regiment remained about a week. While there the disease bred in the swamp opposite Vicksburg began to break out, and many men died. The regiment returned to Vicksburg. They were next ordered to Port Hudson to aid in the subjugation of that place, but did not reach the scene of action until the stronghold had fallen. The Thirty-Eighth remained at Port



Hudson about a month, and while here the disease contracted in the swamps broke out in all its virulence. So universal was the prostration of the soldiers, that during the month, there were on an average from three to fifteen only in the whole regiment that reported able for duty. Almost hourly the death of a companion in arms was announced to his sick and dying comrades. It was while lying here that the regiment met with its severest losses. Here it was that they lost their beloved Colonel.

D. H. Hughes was commissioned Colonel of the Thirty-Eighth Regiment by Gov. Samuel Kirkwood. He was born in Jefferson County, New York, September, 1831, and died August 7, 1863. He died from the disease which carried almost universal death to his entire regiment. Col. Hughes graduated at the Albany Normal Institute in 1853. In 1854 he was employed on the *Prairie Farmer*, Chicago. He married Adaliza Matteson, in Watertown, Jefferson County, N. Y., in March, 1855, and immediately thereafter came to Decorah, engaging in the practice of law. Col. Hughes was a man of commanding stature, fine presence, the soul of honor, and became a lawyer of considerable repute. He was a Democrat in politics, but was elected County Judge of Winneshiek County in the fall of 1859, notwithstanding the county then, as now, was of strong Republican complexion. He was the candidate of his party for State Senator in the fall of 1861, and only failed of an election by nine votes. The Colonel was a War Democrat from the outset, and pending the consideration of a petition of prominent Republicans and Democrats to become an independent candidate for Judge of the District Court of the Tenth Judicial District, hearing the cry of his country for more troops, Judge Hughes promptly cast aside his political opportunity to enter upon a patriotic duty; and, warmly espousing her cause, made a stirring canvass of the county in that behalf, and thus drifted into the army.

Col. Hughes, while stationed at New Madrid, was called to St. Louis as Judge Advocate in some trials then pending, and from his bearing on that occasion, and the ability he displayed, upon the conclusion of the trials the Court (and it was a Court of strangers to him, too) unanimously recommended his promotion to Brigadier-General, which document, however, he would not allow to go forward, alleging as a reason his brief experience as a military commander, and that there were already lives enough under his charge. Such was his modesty and noble character. Col. Hughes died respected and beloved by all his soldiers, and not more universal was the mourning in camp over the

death of their commander than that of his host of friends at home.

The Thirty-Eighth took their departure from Port Hudson for New Orleans, where they remained about three months. It was next transferred to Point Isabel, on the Rio Grande River. After leaving Port Hudson Company E was without a commissioned officer for nearly a year. The regiment was next sent to Brownsville, Texas. While here Quartermaster T. R. Crandall was made Captain of Company E, and Walter Green was made its First Lieutenant.

August, 1864, again found the regiment in New Orleans. From here it was sent to Morganzie Bend. While at Morganzie Bend the Thirty-Fourth and Thirty-Eighth were consolidated, and afterwards known as the Thirty-Fourth. The new regiment numbered 1056 men. Company E, of Winneshiek, and Company F, of Fayette, were likewise consolidated, and afterward known as Company K. Capt. Rogers, of Company F, and Lieut. Green, were relieved of duty, and T. R. Crandall made Captain. H. T. Shumaker, of the original Company F, was made First Lieutenant, and O. J. Clark made Second Lieutenant. Company D and K were likewise consolidated. The Thirty-Fourth participated in the siege of Fort Gains and Fort Morgan, on Mobile Bay, and here it remained until these forts capitulated. The Thirty-Fourth was also present at the charge on Fort Fisher. The regiment was engaged in the last battle of the war, which was the taking of Fort Blakesly, the day before Lee's surrender. In this engagement, in just eighteen minutes, over 1,500 Union soldiers were slain and wounded. The regiment was mustered out of the service at Houston, Texas, but did not disband until it reached Davenport.

Company D, Sixth Iowa Cavalry, was the last company donated to the Union cause by Winneshiek County. Although the men composing this company enlisted with the intention and expectation of fighting rebels, they were transferred to other fields of duty—which was even more undesirable—that of fighting Indians. The company was mustered into the United States service in February, 1863, with the following officers:

*Captain*—T. W. Burdick.

*First Lieutenant*—Sherman Page.

*Second Lieutenant*—Timothy Finn.

*Orderly Sergeant*—W. H. Fannon.

The United States forces, in which was Company K, had several engagements with the Indians, each time coming out victorious, with great loss to the Indians and small loss to themselves. Company D

was engaged in the battle of Whitestone Hills on the 3d of September, 1863. In 1864 the company was engaged in five different battles with the Indians. The company was mustered out of the service in October, 1865.

The brave who died in the mountains of Arkansas, the marshes of Louisiana, the rocky fastnesses of Georgia, and the swamps of Carolina, are remembered less vividly by their old comrades as year by year passes away, and when this generation has gone there will be none to recall the names of the youthful heroes of Winneshiek County who faced fatigue and sickness, steel and ball, and died in the fierce front of battle, facing the foe, or fell victims to malarious diseases. But while their individual memories will have perished, the cause for which they died, the cause for which they perished, the cause of liberty and humanity will remain, and future generations will derive fresh courage to struggle for the right from the glorious example of the citizen-soldiers who crushed the "Great Rebellion."

#### "THE IOWA BOYS."

##### I.

The bugles of war sound through the land,  
 From ocean to ocean, o'er prairie and town,  
 Who is so base as to tamely stand  
 While traitors tear "Old Glory" down?  
 What though fortune may sometimes frown,  
 And battles be lost, we will never yield;  
 Victory yet will our banners crown  
 When "The Iowa Boys" are in the field.

##### II.

Answered the State that never had failed  
 Once in its duty to freedom and right:  
 "Here are my children, when law is assailed,  
 Freely I give them to aid in the fight;  
 When treason is conquered by loyalty's might,  
 Home let them come with no stain on their shield."  
 We marched, and the stars on the flag grew bright,  
 For "The Iowa Boys" were in the field.



## III.

Up from the battle where Lyon died  
Rose the notes of our proud refrain ;  
Donelson's victory quick replied,  
Pea Ridge echoed it back again ;  
Vicksburg swelled the triumphant strain,  
As in base surrender the rebels kneeled,  
And California called to Maine:  
" 'The Iowa Boys' are in the field!"

## IV.

Lookout Mountain re echoed our tread  
As we marched embattled upon his brow,  
While the sun of victory crowned his head,  
And the clouds rolled dark in the vale below.  
Back to Atlanta we hurled the foe,  
Shattered and beaten his columns reeled ;  
And our colors, all blood-stained and shot-torn, show  
That "The Iowa Boys" were in the field.

## V.

With Sherman we marched to the waiting sea  
That thundered a welcome upon the strand ;  
And as sweeps the whirlwind so swept we  
Through the length and breadth of the Southron's land.  
At last, in the "Grand Review" we stand,  
The battle is won, and no stain on our shield,  
While praise to the victors rose full and grand,  
And "The Iowa Boys" marched home from the field.

## VI.

Ah, not *all*! Full many a heart  
Mourns to-day in the soldier's home ;  
And the eyes that saw him through tears depart  
Will weep for aye, though he never come.  
When we marched in pride past the Capitol's dome,  
When thousands shouted and bugles pealed  
In the "Grand Review," we all missed some  
Of "The Iowa Boys" who had died on the field.

## VII.

Died on the field of their honor and fame,  
Whose blood-drenched sod is their fittest pall,  
With never a blot on their soldier name,  
Dying that liberty might not fall.  
Dying to break the slaves' dark thrall,  
Whose charter of freedom their life blood sealed ;  
Comrades, this toast in silence all :  
*"To 'The Iowa Boys' who have died on the field."*

## CHAPTER IX.

## CONCLUSION OF COUNTY HISTORY.

*The Flush Times of 1856—First Railroad Organization—The Northwestern Railroad—First Successful Railroad Company—The Decorah Branch—Fubilee over its Completion—Decorah a Station of which the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad Company are Proud—Statistics Showing the Railroad Business Transacted at Decorah—The Educational Interests of Winneshiek County—Statistics that Indicate the Progress of Our People—Three Celebrated Murder Trials—Telyea, McClintock and Stickles—Old Settlers' Association—Conclusion of County History.*

In 1856 everything was booming. The abundant resources of a new country had reached a high state of development, money was plenty, and the prospects for the future bright. One thing alone seemed lacking to make the people perfectly satisfied with their condition—better facilities for transportation. The time had passed when the products of the county could be transported sixty miles to market by ox-teams without suffering much inconvenience and loss. The time had come when a railroad was a necessity. The railroad fever was raging throughout the West, and far-seeing ones realized the immense value that would sweep in on iron rails drawn by the iron horse. After a due amount of talk and agitation, the Northwestern Railroad Company was formed. Decorah was its headquarters, but they took in prominent citizens of Clinton. John Thompson, of Clermont, became President; O. C. Lee, a banker at McGregor, Secretary; W. F. Kimball, of Decorah, Treasurer; Eb. Baldwin, Chief Engineer; and E. E. Cooley, Attorney. With a mighty faith in the future, business men put down their names for stock by the thousand dollars' worth, and \$80,000 of the capital was actually subscribed. Whether it could all have been paid for is another matter. With such a start as this, the Company felt it could appeal to the public spirit of the people, and the county was asked to bond itself to the amount of \$100,000. Strange as it may seem to later comers, who worked and toiled to gather together the few thousands which the railroad actually cost when it did come, the people enthusiastically came forward and voted aye. The bonds were printed, after some delay, and were all ready to be formally signed, sealed and delivered, when the Supreme Court stamped the law under

which the bonds were being put out, with the word "unconstitutional." The scheme collapsed, and the county was saved a burden of debt, which might have retarded its progress for all the years past, as well as scores to come. It is worthy of note that when the railroad did come to us it followed the line marked out by those pioneers, and proved that their plans were wise and far-sighted, if they were a dozen years ahead of the times.

Several attempts were made before a railroad was finally built. The Company to succeed was the McGregor Western. This company was organized January 19, 1863. The commencement of the road was at North McGregor. Work was commenced in March, 1863, and in one year the road was in running order to Monona, fourteen and one-half miles. The work was completed to Postville in September, 1864, to Castalia in October, 1864, and to Conover in August, 1865.

Decorah, at this date, had become a thriving inland city, well supported with newly-started manufactories. Her citizens looked upon the road that was to pass them by with a covetous eye. Railroad connection, with river and lake transportation, was necessary to the future prosperity of the place. This was readily comprehended, and every effort was put forth by an energetic people to secure better transportation facilities. As a result, proposals were made to the managers of the McGregor Western Railway to build a branch line from Conover to Decorah, nine miles. The citizens of Decorah pledged themselves to furnish \$40,000, as a bonus, provided the Company would build the nine miles of road, which the managers agreed to do. Nearly \$18,000 was paid in by the people of Decorah, and, on the other hand, the road was graded and bridged, ready for the superstructure. But the main line having been leased to the Milwaukee & Prairie du Chien Company, work on the branch was suspended in September, 1865.

The road is now operated under the management of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company, by which name it is known. The branch was completed to Decorah in September, 1869, in accordance with the agreement made by the Company with the citizens of Decorah. The event was one of great importance to the capital city of the county. A day of celebration and rejoicing was given in honor of the event. Large crowds of people thronged to the city, and many availed themselves of the opportunity offered and made excursion trips to Conover and back.

Hon. E. E. Cooley delivered an address, in which he ably set forth the great value the new railroad would be to Decorah and the sur-



rounding country. At the time, his predictions seemed to many to be extravagant; yet as the years have come and gone, even greater advantages than were foretold by the eminent orator, have been realized as the natural result of this intercourse established with the outer commercial world.

Authentic information conclusively affirms that the nine miles of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad known as "the branch," and connecting Decorah with the main line, pays more (by double) to the mile than any other nine miles of the entire road.

That the above may not seem as an empty assertion, herewith are given the figures of freights received and shipped, and other reliable data, from which the reader may form his own conclusions. The books of the Company for 1875 show that there were 23,824,000 pounds of freight received at Decorah, and the amount paid on the same to be \$68,873.58. The freight forwarded for 1875 amounted to 45,643,015 pounds, on which was paid \$138,317.50.

The above amounts received for freights are exclusive of advance charges.

The sale of passenger tickets at this station was as follows:

Tickets .....	\$13,940.65
Coupons .....	2,980.80
Total .....	\$16,921.45

These total amounts give as the total earnings of the Branch for the year 1875 \$224,112.53, which is a good index to the wealth and prosperity of the county, the immediate result of an energetic people.

The citizens of Winneshiek County were not engaged in work all these years that alone improved the material features of the county—work that resulted pecuniarily advantageous, such as agriculture, building, etc.—but found time and money to devote to the mental advancement of the young and growing population. The people of Winneshiek County are peculiarly an educational people. It seems to be the chief aim of nearly every parent to give his children an education, and all measures tending to this result have been heartily encouraged. So strong has the popular will been in this direction that educational interests seem to have outstripped all others. County Superintendent Kessey's report for 1876 makes the following showing: The number of graded schools are 9; the number of ungraded, 125. The number of teachers employed during the year was 190, of which number 72 were

males and 118 females. The compensation paid to male teachers averaged \$39.74; females, \$27.28. The muster-roll of Winneshiek County's school children shows the small army of 9,332, of which number there are 4,939 males and 4,393 females. This army of youths is marshaled in 134 school-houses, where they receive their educational training, and these school-houses are kept in repair at an average cost of \$10,162.67, and the teachers who drill this small army are employed by the county at a cost of \$37,294.98 annually.

The foregoing statistics regarding shipments and receipts at the chief railroad station in the county furnishes every reader with the facts from which can be deducted the wonderful material growth and prosperity of Winneshiek County. The educational statistics likewise furnish reliable data from which correct conclusions can be drawn regarding the educational interests of the county and its wonderful growth.

Winneshiek County has had its sensational murder trials. No less than three celebrated trials of this character have engaged the attention of the courts, and furnished excitement to the public, since the organization of the county. The first trial for murder was held in 1861. The defendants were John Livengood and Delilah A. Telyea, who were tried for the murder of Charles Telyea, the husband of Delilah A., in the October term of Court, 1861, before Judge Williams. When the charge was first made against the guilty parties, the Grand Jury failed to find an indictment, on the ground that the body of the murdered man had not been found; but the case was brought before the next Grand Jury, who brought in a bill. Public opinion was strong against the accused, and great excitement prevailed. The public was agitated to such an extent over the matter that the defendants' attorneys sued for a change of venue, which was granted. The case was taken to Clayton County, where the parties were tried. Livengood was found guilty, and sentenced to the penitentiary for life; while Mrs. Telyea was acquitted, although public opinion generally considered her guilty. Livengood was pardoned out at the end of ten years, and is supposed to be now living somewhere in Northern Wisconsin.

The next case to enlist attention, and set the public in a state of fermentation, was that of Charles D. Seeley, for the murder of William McClintock, tried before Judge McGlatherty, February 11, 1872. Seeley was convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to the penitentiary, at hard labor, for fifteen months.

The third and last murder trial, and by far the most exciting, was that of Helen D. Stickles for the murder of her husband, J. P. Stickles, by

poison. A condensed statement of the facts in the case are these :

On January 4, 1876, John P. Stickles, to all appearances, was enjoying perfect health. That afternoon he was suddenly taken sick, and died within a few hours, with all the attendant symptoms of poisoning by strychnine. The next morning, as the news circulated from mouth to mouth, giving in detail the sudden and horrible death, the conviction was forced upon the community that either a fatal mistake had been made in administering medicine to the unfortunate man, or a wanton and terrible crime had been committed. A post-mortem examination was held, which served to strengthen the previous theory that J. P. Stickles had died from poison. The stomach was sent to Chicago for analysis. Dr. M. P. Hatfield, the chemist who made the analysis, sent back word that he had found strychnine. As a result of the continual agitation of the question by the public, and the evidence produced, the Grand Jury, at its March session, 1876, indicted Helen D. Stickles for murder. The case came on for trial in the District Court, Judge Reuben Noble presiding, in June. The trial lasted nine days, during which time the excitement was intense and unabated. O. J. Clark, Prosecuting Attorney, was aided by J. T. Clark in prosecuting the side of the State, while C. P. Brown and Cyrus Wellington made themselves noted as criminal lawyers, by the ability with which they defended the accused. It was one of the most stubbornly-contested trials ever held in the county. Public opinion very generally condemned Mrs. Stickles, but the jury disagreed, standing five for acquittal to seven for conviction. A change of venue was granted the accused, and the case was taken to Fayette County for trial, where it is now pending.

In concluding these chapters on County History, I know of no more graceful way of arrangement than by weaving in an account of the Old Settlers' Association, organized on the 4th of July, 1876. The event is one of historical importance, and is deserving of a place on record. It is to these pioneers, their character, energy and industry, that we are to-day, in a great measure, indebted for our thrift and prosperity. It is they who make our history so interesting in the first chapters, and they to whom we should feel in duty bound to say a parting word.

On the 4th of July, 1876, a grand celebration was held in Decorah. This occasion was seized upon to hold an old settlers' meeting. Steyer's Opera House was selected as the place for holding the meeting, and other necessary arrangements were perfected. Two hundred and twenty-two in all attended the meeting. Of this number I am able to tell the year in which most of these pioneers came to the county :



No.	Year.
5 of .....	1848
7 of .....	1849
22 of .....	1850
25 of .....	1851
21 of .....	1852
21 of .....	1853
32 of .....	1854
57 of .....	1855
32 of .....	1856

Many men and women in attendance wore brows frosted with time, yet were hale and hearty, showing a remarkable preservation. They came to the county when it was an Indian's paradise, men and women yet sturdy, on whose faces are stamped the index of their character, in which is easily read the energy, perseverance and determination indispensable in a pioneer. They commenced in this (then) wild land, on the very borders of civilization, to make homes for themselves and their children. Their thrift of to-day answers how well they have succeeded.

Appended herewith is the official report of the meeting :

On July 4th, 1876, the Old Settlers of Winneshiek County met in Steyer's Opera House. Hon. E. E. Cooley called the meeting to order, and Hon. John DeCow was chosen Chairman, and Geo. N. Holway and Erick Anderson, Secretaries. The meeting was then opened with prayer by Rev. H. B. Woodworth.

The hall was comfortably full, all being surprised by the very large number of old settlers present.

An historical sketch of the settlement of the county, which had been prepared by A. K. Bailey, was then read, and at its conclusion, on motion of Mr. James Simpson, a vote of thanks was given Mr. A. K. Bailey for his able address and early history of Winneshiek County.

On motion of Capt. T. W. Burdick, a committee was appointed to prepare a plan for an Old Settlers' Union. Capt. T. W. Burdick, A. Tracy, J. F. Huber, Nelson Johnson, and William Beard were appointed. While the committee were out, Hon. E. E. Cooley addressed the meeting.

On motion of D. O. Dahly, it was requested to publish Mr. Bailey's address.

The committee then made their report. Moved and seconded that the report be received. Carried. Amended, that the time of the old settlers be fixed at July 4, 1861. Carried.

On motion of L. Standring, a committee was appointed to select officers for the ensuing year. Carried.

Committee reported the following :

*President*—John DeCow.

*Vice-Presidents*—T. W. Burdick, Nelson Johnson and E. E. Cooley.

*Secretary*—A. K. Bailey.

*Treasurer*—A. Bradish.

*Executive Committee*—Not reported.

While the committee were out, A. K. Bailey read two letters from old settlers—one from Col. Taylor and one from S. M. Leach.

Then adjourned.

GEO. N. HOLWAY, *Secretary*.

As Iowa is the center diadem of the Union, so is Winneshiek County one of the richest and brightest jewels that make it such. As Iowa, of all the States, has been one of the principal stages on which have been acted all the attributes pertaining to freedom, equality and justice, so has Winneshiek County stood in relation to the other counties that compose our great State. For what we are, every man should be proud ; and the debt of gratitude for these blessings and privileges is justly owing to the sterling class of emigrants that first settled these prairies. Our free soil, free labor, free schools, free speech, free press, free worship, free men and free women, were their free gift and contribution.

## CHAPTER X.

## FORT ATKINSON.

*Description of the Fort—An Incident—The Fort Abandoned—Mr. Cooney as a Politician—The First Settlers—The Next Comers—The Goddard Family—Sale of the Fort—The Canadians—The Fort at its Zenith—Preparations for a Great City—Banking House—A Mercantile Venture—The Swindlers and their Record—Their Society, and a Patriotic Celebration—The Ames Grist Mill—Jumping Claims—The Collapse—The Second and Third Era of Fort Atkinson—The New Town—Conclusion.*

The history of the Old Fort and Old Mission is, properly, the first pages in the history of Winneshiek County. There is no place, perhaps, throughout the entire county, that can furnish a richer fund of historical information than Fort Atkinson. For the first few years in the history of the county, it was the only abiding place of white men within its boundary limits.

The fort bearing the name of the successful Indian General, Atkinson, the hero of the Black Hawk war, was commenced on the 2d of June, 1840. A company of mechanics, about fifty in number, contracted to do the work. Among the number was James Tapper, residing at Monona. These men were escorted from Fort Crawford, Wisconsin, to the place selected for the fort, by Company F, Fifth U. S. Infantry, commanded by Isaac Lyon.

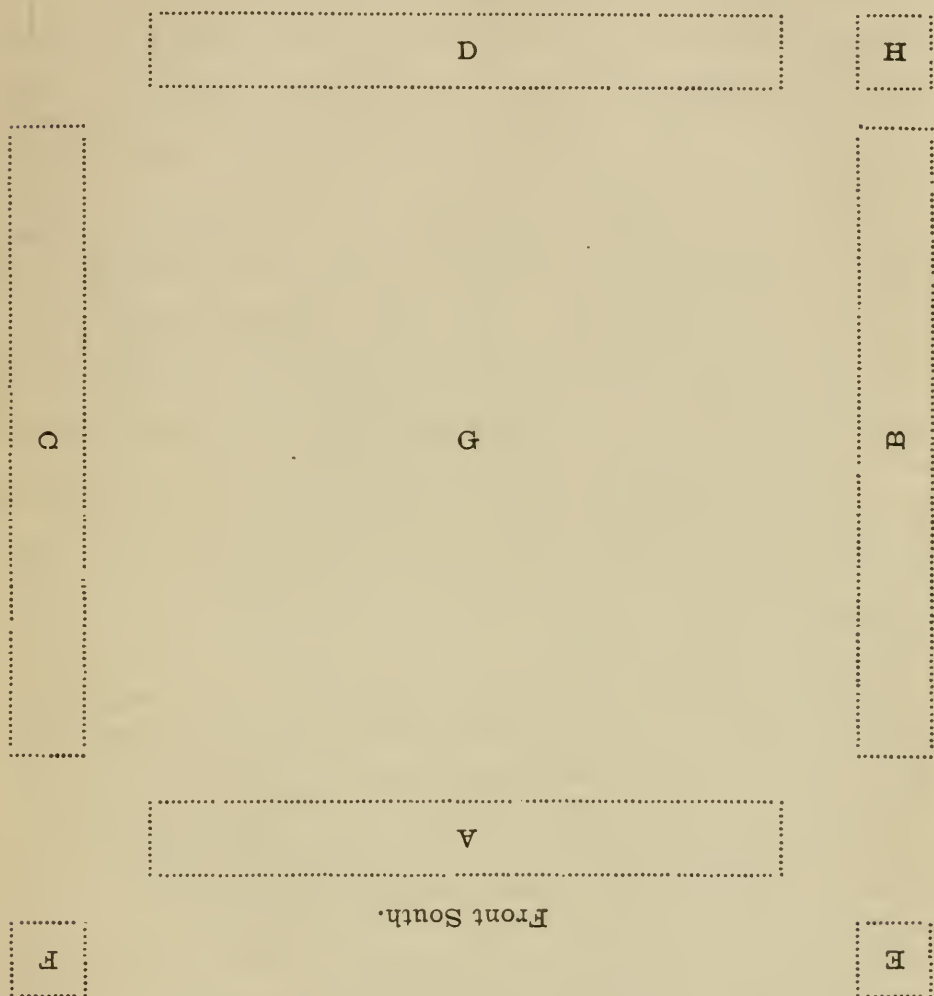
A captain of artillery named Sumner, who became the illustrious Gen. E. V. Sumner of the late war of the rebellion, superintended the building of the fort, aided by Happy Jack, his First Lieutenant. Sumner was every inch a military man, and a good engineer, as his work will attest even at this late day, considering what he had to do with.

Sumner held command of the fort until the Mexican war, when he was detailed to fields furnishing more active service. Happy Jack was a jolly fellow, and had been a sailor in his early days. He was unstable and rattle-brained, and was always getting into some difficulty. He was afterward killed in one of his reckless exploits.

The fort was built for the protection of the Winnebago Indians from the hostile and predatory tribes surrounding them, as well as for the protection of the pioneer settlers. It was stone masonry work, situated on an eminence north of the present town of Fort Atkinson, and origin-



ally consisted of four main buildings, and two gun houses, as represented in the following diagram :



[A, B, C and D, Barracks or Main Buildings ; F and H, Gun Houses ; E, Powder House ; G, Flag Staff.

The fort was built in the shape of a square, inclosing an acre of ground, the material of which it was built being prepared at Fort Crawford. The cost of making a wagon-road, the same ever since known as the Old Military, and transporting the material to its place of destination, augmented the cost of building the fort to the enormous sum of \$93,000. It was afterwards sold at public auction to private parties for \$3,521. In 1845 Capt. Sumner still held command of the fort. The force at that time consisted of a company of infantry and one of dragoons. In 1846 Capt. Sumner left for Mexico, and the fort was then

garrisoned by two companies of volunteers. Capt. James Morgan of Burlington, succeeded to the command of the infantry, and Capt. John Parker, of Dubuque, to the command of the dragoons. In 1847 Capt. Morgan's company was mustered out of the service, and Capt. Parker given entire charge of the fort until the removal of the Indians, in 1848. It was found necessary to use force to compel them to vacate the country. Capt. Knowlton, afterwards Judge Knowlton, was detailed to assist the command under Capt. Parker.

At the time the company commanded by Capt. Parker was stationed at the fort, an incident occurred which verifies the old maxim that "two of a trade can never agree." The Orderly of the company was a young lawyer hailing from Connecticut, who had been a prominent man in the political arena. The Second Sergeant was also a young lawyer, who hailed from Vermont. On a certain occasion a dispute sprang up between them; words were plenty, as is usual with lawyers, when Vermont says to Connecticut, "If you did not rank me, I would thrash you like h—l." To which Connecticut replied, "I waive my rank." They adjourned from the parade-ground; and stripped for the contest. The number of rounds fought deponent saith not; but as the story goes, Vermont came off victor.

"Vermont" afterwards located at Garnavillo, and practiced law. While here he was arrested for horse-stealing, and very suddenly disappeared. He is to-day a prominent lawyer of Plattsburg, N. Y. The lawyer whom I have designated "Connecticut" became a distinguished jurist in this District, and now occupies a prominent position as an influential citizen in this State. He believes, with all his strength and might, in narrow-gauge railways, but is a broad-gauge man.

After the removal of the Indians, in 1848, there was no further necessity for keeping up military appearances, consequently the fort, as a military rendezvous, was dispensed with; yet the Government did not entirely abandon it. A man named Alexander Faulkner was appointed to look after it. Soon after, Faulkner was relieved by George Cooney, a well-known citizen of the county, who is yet living in the vicinity of the old fort.

In 1852, Mr. Cooney was appointed to take charge of the old fort and Government buildings at Fort Atkinson. That wire-pulling and shrewdness were necessary in those days, as well as at the present time, in order to obtain places of trust under the Government, is peculiarly exemplified in the manner of Mr. Cooney's appointment. A short time after the election, Mr. Cooney happened into Mr. Gilbert's store, and

in conversation with Mr. Moon and Mr. Churchill understood that Mr. ——— intended trying to obtain the commission to preside over the fort and Government property. Mr. Underhill said that he was a Democrat, and could get it. Mr. Moon claimed to be a fellow Democrat, and consequently stood the best show for the appointment. Mr. Cooney remained neutral, but determined, then and there, that neither of them should have the coveted place. The next day Mr. Cooney sought McKay's postoffice on a mission known only to himself. He mailed a letter to his old friend Judge Murdock, asking his aid in obtaining charge of the fort. In the next mail he received an answer, telling him to prepare for the fort. Mr. Cooney was elated at his prospects of becoming a Government employee, and on reaching home told his wife of his good luck. She was incredulous at first, but when shown the Judge's letter, accepted it as an actual reality.

The permanent settlement of the county commenced in 1847. In that year the pioneers and homesteaders came to this county, to-wit: Gotlob and Getleib Krumm, Charles Kregg and Francis Rogers. They arrived in June, of that year. Gotlob Krumm came direct from South Germany to Fort Atkinson. The first habitation of this family, consisting of Gotlob, his wife, and two little children, was a deserted Indian wigwam, standing beside a beautiful spring. In it they lived a few weeks, until Mr. Krumm, with the help of Charles Kregg, built a log house, which also stood by the spring, and was the first house built and occupied by an actual settler in this part of the county. But it has long since been torn down, and the ground where it once stood yields yearly a rich harvest of golden grain. The clear, crystal waters of the spring have been taken from its bed of many-colored pebbles, and are conveyed through a leaden pipe down to a beautiful grove, where it is somewhat surprised to find the same pleasant family, with a few additions, occupying a more grand and spacious dwelling, surrounded by beautiful trees, shrubbery and flowers, with a huge barn and granaries in the background.

In 1848, previous to the removal of the Indians, George Bachel came to the fort prospecting. The following year he returned, bringing with him his family. He was accompanied by five other families, all of whom made a permanent settlement in Washington Township. Those who accompanied Mr. Bachel were Joseph Huber and family, Andrew Meyers and family, and Jonah Rausch and family. These people possessed the requisite courage and determination indispensable in the early settler, and went to work with a will to build a home in what was then a



thoroughly new country. These hardy settlers never despaired; they knew there was hard work to be done, privations to undergo, ere they would view the bright and prospering future in store for them. That their greatest endeavors and highest expectations have been crowned with success, even beyond their own anticipations, their present affluent circumstances bear evidence. The most of these parties still abide on the old homesteads, which cost them in their early life much privation and hardship, but in their old age is their support and comfort. It will be noticed that all except Mr. Rogers were Germans.

In the fall of the same year (1849), Josiah Goddard, Sr., moved in from Wisconsin, bringing a family consisting of seven children. He purchased the "claim" of one Olmstead, an Indian trader, and now occupies it as a homestead. The buildings of the trading post were built in the same form as the fort, enclosing a hollow square. A blacksmith shop, situated at the southwest corner of the buildings, and one of the store buildings, are still standing, and have been in use from that day to this. At that time, I learn from Mr. Goddard, Jr., there was a small farm house close to the fort, occupied by a Mr. Kilpatrick. It is the same property now owned by the heirs of Joseph Morse. Mr. G. remembers the place very distinctly, because in passing it, the day after his father moved, he saw standing by the roadside a barrel full of wild honey, of which he took a slice. At that time the country was full of bee trees, and parties from Wisconsin traversed the country hunting them, and buying honey of others. Mr. Goddard, as above stated, still resides on the farm he then purchased, enjoying a genial old age. His sons have grown up around him into useful, honorable, prosperous citizens, occupying over 1,500 acres of land, worth from \$25 to \$40 per acre.

Prior to these dates we have no knowledge that there were any settlers in the county, although there may have been a few, who had crept over the line and settled on that part of the reservation which is now in the southeastern corner of the county.

In 1853, after the removal of the Indians, the fort became useless as Government property, and the administration then in power decided to dispose of it at public auction.

On the reception of this news, in July, 1853, one of the Day boys visited Mr. Cooney at the fort, and informed him that the fort and Government buildings attached were to be sold at auction the next Wednesday. This intelligence was sad news to him; he undoubtedly would have much rather heard of somebody's wedding. By previous agree-

ment he had promised to inform certain parties of the sale when it should take place; and he immediately dispatched a messenger with the intelligence to H. D. Evans and S. A. Clark, of Prairie du Chien, and another to the Bishop at Dubuque. On the morning of the sale these parties were present, bring with them \$4,000 in gold to purchase it with. John M. Flowers, Captain Frazier, and a gentleman from White Pigeon were also on the ground in hopes of purchasing the fort.

The Flowers were extraordinary characters, and played no little part in the history of Fort Atkinson. There were two brothers of them, and were classed with Charley Clark, Coleman and Tavernier, as "the Canadians." These Canadians came to the fort with the intention of making a living easily. They had somehow got the impression that Fort Atkinson was destined to be a great city, and thought it afforded a rich field in which to exercise their wit and shrewdness to benefit themselves. In language not to be misunderstood, they were sharpers.

Flowers wanted to get possession of the fort property, and induced a widowed English lady by the name of Newington, to purchase it—he bidding the same off. As the bidding progressed and the price advanced in the Fort, Flowers became fearful that he would not be able to make the purchase, and asked those bidding against him, what they would take to stop where they were. Clark, Evans and the others held a consultation, and as a result, agreed to take \$25. Flowers said he would give it, and accordingly wrote his note for the amount. Said note read as follows:

"I owe you \$25, for value received.

"J. M. FLOWERS.

"Dated Fort Atkinson, 1853."

Four years after this note was given, Mr. Evans placed it in Mr. Cooney's hands (who was a Justice of Peace at the time) for collection. Three years later Mr. Cooney got his pay out of Flowers in sawing.

The fort was sold to Flowers for \$3,521.

In 1856-7, these operators were in their glory. One would suppose from the cloth worn, and the grandeur assumed by the Canadians—or "higher class," as they termed themselves, to distinguish them from the plainer and honest citizens of the town—that it was a fashionable watering place, or favorite retreat for the wealthiest nabobs in the land. Old Fort Atkinson, under their *regime*, attained the meridian of her splendor. The capitalists—or Canadians—of the place, fitted up rooms in the fort in a costly and expensive manner. That they possessed some money no one doubted; but all those with whom they had any dealing supposed

them to be immensely rich, when in fact they had only what they displayed—sufficiently enough to affect the wealth they hoped to accumulate through trickery, and by assuming the role of millionaires.

They represented themselves to the credulous men they dealt with, as retired gentlemen, who sought this secluded place in the interior, for rest.

Flowers was pleased with the bargain he had made in the purchase of the fort, but was somewhat chagrined on receiving the intelligence that the sale did not include the eighty acres of land on which the buildings stood. He immediately set his scheming brain to work to devise some plan by which he might get the land into his possession. F. W. Coleman, a very clever fellow, and Flowers made out an affidavit, setting forth, in very strong language, the grievances of one Caroline Newington; stating that Mrs. Newington was the widow of an English officer, and a lady of rank and station; that her husband had fallen in battle—giving some outlandish name as the place where his death occurred; and that the money with which she had made the purchase was all she had in the world. The document concluded with a strong appeal to the government, praying that the land in connection with the fort might be considered a part of the purchase. Through the influence of H. M. Rice, Senator from Minnesota, and Armstrong, Secretary of State of Minnesota, they succeeded in getting their petition through Congress, granting the eighty acres prayed for at Government price.

The capitalists then sent east for a surveyor, and on his arrival had 380 acres laid off into city blocks. (I will state here that the surveyor never received his promised remuneration, and was obliged to pawn his compass in order to raise the necessary funds with which to return home.) In conversation with these capitalists one would infer that they contemplated a city at the fort second to none in magnitude in the whole world.

When so much had been accomplished, the next necessary step resolved upon to insure the prosperity of the city, was the immediate establishment of a hotel. The victim was found in a newly arrived immigrant from Canada. He was roped into buying one half of the fort buildings for the trifling sum of \$7,000. For a time the new landlord was elated over the rushing business he was doing. Retired gentlemen, capitalists and laborers, all shared the hospitalities of his house. When the time approached for settlement the landlord was surprised to find that his guests had no money, and the emptiness of their pockets was only exceeded by their willingness to pay him in town lots,



The several proprietors and capitalists of this mythical city were to be seen at all hours of the day on the principal avenues and thoroughfares with a map, blank deeds, pen and ink and notary seal, ready to transfer their valuable real estate to other hands. By appearances the casual observer would very naturally conclude that the fort was destined to be a second Chicago. For a time business was prosperous, and every one happy.

Flowers & Brother were capitalists, and proprietors of a saw mill, and ever ready to furnish material for building purposes, at a minimum rate.

Of course, a great city must necessarily have a banking house; and who, in this immaculate place could be found more able and capable (and I add willing) of handling other people's money than Flowers & Brother. A banking house was organized under the name and firm of Wheeler, Flowers & Bro. Checks and drafts were printed, safes purchased, and contractors and architects engaged to erect a suitable building. The contractor being rather slow in furnishing the building, Mr. Job Flowers, a member of the firm, thought it too bad that their capital should be lying idle, and argued that it would be policy to invest in wild land, until such time as the building should be completed. Mr. Wheeler did not care to invest in wild land; but concluded that it would be advisable to loan his money, which amounted to several thousand dollars, to his partners. The Flowers Brothers obtained the money, and invested the same in wild land.

In a short time the building was completed, and Mr. Wheeler thought it time to open bank and commence business. But on examination his co-partners were found to be penniless, and his money invested in wild land, which they had mortgaged for twice its value. Consequently the banking speculation was abandoned, and Mr. Wheeler was obliged to pawn his safe in order to raise money sufficient to enable him to return to his friends in the East.

A gentleman by the name of Wood was enticed to the fort by this Canadian ring. He engaged in the mercantile business, investing about \$15,000 in the same. He, also, like the hotel-keeper, did a first-class credit business. Everybody seemed willing to take his goods on time; especially were the capitalists eager to do this. Later in the year, as Mr. Wood's payments became due, and his creditors flocked about him, he became convinced of the advisability of collecting his outstanding accounts. Being honest himself, he gave everybody else credit for the same moral attribute. He very willingly trusted the capitalists, thinking his money ready when called for. He proceeded to make his collections.

As he demanded of the capitalists his dues, he received in reply the answer: "I have no money at present;" capitalist drawing forth at the same time from an inner coat-pocket, a map of the town, and pointing out his possessions, would continue, "but I have some very desirable property which I should be glad to exchange on account." The merchant being conscious that town lots would not buy goods in New York, nor pay for what he had already bought on credit, would very respectfully decline to make the trade.

Mr. Wood became disheartened at the gloomy prospect before him, and wished to close out his business while he yet had something left. The capitalists were ready to make the purchase, on condition that he would take real estate and city property in exchange. Mr. Wood thought the real estate better than nothing, and made the transfer; but when he came to examine the records, he found the property which he had traded for to be burdened with incumbrances, and himself a penniless man. He returned to the East, no doubt wiser than when he left there. To-day he is one of the wealthiest merchants in Pittsburgh, and worth more than all the capitalists Fort Atkinson had in her palmiest days.

These here related are but a few of a long catalogue of swindles and rascalities in which these Canadian gentlemen indulged. John Flowers borrowed \$1,500 from J. P. McKinney, then a resident of the fort, promising to give a mortgage on his saw mill. The saw mill had previously been mortgaged for more than its real value, and, as a consequence, Mr. McKinney never received back a cent of the money loaned. They swindled Mr. Vaughn, of the fort, out of \$6,000 of borrowed money.

In 1857 the Canadians reached the pinnacle of their existence. The fort was in the hey-day of its prosperity. It was the favorite resort of the society-loving people of Winneshiek County. And whatever may be said of them otherwise, they certainly were unexcelled in the art of "entertaining" in the most perfect and "high-toned" style. Evening dress parties were regularly given, of the most select character, only those appearing who could afford to dress in the prevailing style. The gentlemen played their role exceedingly well, while their ladies were ever most hospitable and entertaining.

The 4th of July, 1857, was observed in great style by the Canadians. The emblem of liberty was hoisted, bands discoursed sweet strains of music, stirring and patriotic speeches were made, and the day wound up with a grand display of fireworks and a select ball, attended by all the

elite of the surrounding country. It is a day well remembered by all the old settlers who attended it.

In 1857 a grist mill was commenced on the site where the Ames Mill now stands. Finkle & Clark were the builders, and they received a certain portion of the town-plat for building the mill, getting a warranty deed for the same. Mr. McMillan, a resident of Fort Atkinson, who resided, previous to 1857, in Canada, and an acquaintance of Finkle, was induced by Finkle to accompany him to the United States, and aid in the construction of the mill, with promises of a fair remuneration. The mill was completed in November, but, owing to some miscalculation of the architect in laying out the foundation, when the water was let through the floom it undermined the wall, and rent the mill in twain, precipitating a portion of it into the Turkey River. The mill was reconstructed shortly afterward. The partners then became involved in a personal embroglio, and in order to make a satisfactory adjustment of their difficulties, made an assignment of the mill property to Coleman. Clark afterward became dissatisfied with the agreement, and proceeded to divest the mill of certain property contiguous to it. Coleman, about this time, entered Clark's house during his absence, and abstracted from his private desk a receipt for \$1,000, as payment made on the mill. As a result of these illegal transactions, Coleman arrested Clark for petty larceny, and Clark, not to be outdone, had Coleman arrested for grand larceny. An exciting and protracted trial was held at the Fort, Willett appearing for Clark, and Bullis for Coleman. Neither case amounted to anything more than trespass. Coleman was a wealthy man, but not in the sense that the Flowers were. Being a shrewd and crafty man, he early discovered the character of the men with whom he had to deal, and knew that if he would preserve to himself his wealth he must ever be on the alert. To protect himself against the machinations of his cunning associates, he kept a diary, in which he recorded the minutest transactions, or most common conversations had with those with whom he came in contact; and as he was about the only one of the whole clique who had any capital to speak of, the balance sought to pray off of him; hence this safeguard of his. He was continually in litigation with his fellow operators, and his diary always turned to good account.

Coleman had entered a forty, which is now known as the Amy Farm, and stationed a Mr. Scott (who afterwards became Lieutenant-Governor of Arkansas) on said forty to hold the same for him. As soon as Scott had obtained possession, he "claimed" it as his own, and would not surrender on any condition. At this time Mr. Coleman was on



friendly terms with Charles Clark, who, perhaps, of all the Canadians, was best known throughout the county. Clark's operations were as original and multifarious as the "Heathen Chinees," and it was seldom that he and Coleman were not at sword's points. When friends, these two men sometimes worked together in harmony, when occasion warranted mutual benefit. They were both interested in this claim, and determined to get possession of it at all hazards. Accordingly, they visited the claim, and demanded the key to the shanty and his immediate vacation of the premises. Scott swore that he would never surrender the claim, whereupon Clark and Coleman took him down by main force, and rifled his pockets of the key. The victors then secured the services of two men to remain on the claim and hold it for them. But these men, as soon as they were put in possession, declared it their own, and would not surrender until paid fifty dollars for their right. The money was paid, and a man's services secured whom they thought they could trust; but he likewise proved traitor to their interests, and was only induced to relinquish his claim on receipt of fifty dollars. This made the third time in one day that this claim was jumped.

Scott commenced suit against Coleman and Clark for highway robbery; but the suit was compromised, the former agreeing to take town lots, and call their difficulty settled. Scott afterwards presented the deeds to Clark for acknowledgment, but he declined to do it until paid for the property.

It is estimated that in 1857, when the Fort was at the summit of its grandeur, it had a population of 500 souls. A public school, of course, would be a necessary adjunct to so thriving a community. Consequently one was organized, and an estimable and capable teacher was found in the person of Dr. E. Hazen, now a professor in the medical department of the State University, and generally acknowledged as standing at the head of his profession in the State. To Dr. Hazen belongs the credit of teaching the first school at the Fort. The Doctor had met Mr. McKinney and wife, at the commencement of Oberlin College, and was advised by them to emigrate west. He was then a young man, and had graduated. Mr. J. P. McKinney, assisted by his wife, taught the second term of school at the Fort. The school session was held in one of the fort buildings, and their enrollment of scholars numbered nearly 100.

A Mr. Sharp, from Fayette County, kept the first hotel in the place. He dispensed his hospitality in one of the fort buildings. Following

close in his wake came Thomas, the man so severely bitten by the Canadians.

To Mr. George Cooney belongs the honor of being the first Justice of the Peace in the place; and that he did a lucrative business there is every reason to believe, although his mode of conducting business when first inducted into office was somewhat strange, to say the least, as the manner of his docketing the following case will serve to illustrate:

A man named Spillman was arrested and brought before the 'Squire charged with having run a pitchfork into a breechy cow. The case should have been entered on the Justice's docket, "*The State of Iowa vs. Spillman*;" but Mr. Cooney, in his unusual way, entered it "*Cow vs. Pitchfork*."

Martin Bachel was the first Constable elected.

J. P. McKinney was the first Notary Public.

The panic of 1857 came like a besom of destruction. It was disastrous in its effects upon those who had real capital to rest upon. It was especially disastrous to those who were dependent upon their wits. Our capitalists became reduced to sore straits, and they bethought them it was time to shift for winter quarters. Speculations were barren, and real estate had decreased in value until corner-lots could be purchased for a bushel of oats. They sold all their available property, and pawned their shotguns and game dogs in order to get the necessary means with which to find a warmer harbor for the winter. The next year a few of these parties returned, but not with the intention of remaining.

This closed the second era in the history of Fort Atkinson. It was a lively, interesting and entertaining era while it lasted, and the foregoing may only be considered samples of many similar incidents that a veracious narrator might collate. The ten years that followed were uneventful, and must be passed over lightly. A third era dawned with the advent of the Iowa and Dakota Division of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway. It was the era of real business life and growth, substantial, steady and certain. Its future may not be all that the speculators of 1857 anticipated, but it is certainly on a fairer road to attain municipal size and importance than it could have attained under their management with the most favorable circumstances.

The new town of Fort Atkinson was commenced in 1869. The same year the railroad entered the place, J. T. Clark's Addition was made to the town, August 28, 1869. This addition was formerly known as the Tavernier Farm, and was sold to J. T. Clark at sheriff's sale several years previous. Its location is on the south-west quarter of Section 8,

Town 96, Range 9. Main street is eighty feet wide. All the other streets are sixty feet wide. The blocks number from 1 to 14, inclusive.

About this period the first church building was erected. It was located north of the old fort, and built by the aid of subscriptions. The Methodist Church was built soon after. It is located on the old town site, and was built by the aid of S. B. Dunlop, a wealthy farmer residing near by, and largely with his money.

Business men came in, and Fort Atkinson became at once one of the important towns of the county. In 1873 its shipments of such products as grains, live stock, flour and millstuffs, dressed hogs, butter, eggs, etc., aggregated nearly 7,250,000 pounds, or 360 car-loads.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### DECORAH.

*Decorah—A Beautiful Valley—Day Family—Room for Man and Beast—Water Power—A Log Mill—First Marriage—First Carpenter—First Minister—Looking Up the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel—The Pure Article—At the Close of the Year 1854—The First Harness Shop—The First Livery Stable—Land Office—First Bankers—A Pioneer Postoffice—Decorah in 1857—Newspaper History—First City Officers—Manufactures—Banking Interests—Churches—Conclusion.*

Decorah is the county seat of Winneshiek County, connected with the main line of railroad from Chicago and Milwaukee to St. Paul, by a branch railroad ten miles in length, and is a flourishing young city of nearly 4,500 inhabitants. It is located in a very beautiful and picturesque, wide valley on the Upper Iowa River. The valley is deep, the plain upon which the greater part of the town is built being more than 200 feet lower than the highest surface of the table-lands by which it is surrounded.

It is seated in the midst of a beautiful and extensive amphitheatre of hills, the most of which are of handsomely rounded outlines, while others present to the view perpendicular and high limestone cliffs, many of which have been rounded and worn into rude columnar and other



shapes by atmospheric and corrosive agencies, in such a manner that they suggest to the mind the idea of artificial structures, and while you have them in view, with a little aid from the imagination, you can easily imagine that you are looking at the lofty turreted walls of some baronial castle.

The persons destined first to look upon this beautiful valley were the Days. They came in the month of June, at that season of the year when nature had dressed the bluffs and valleys in its beautiful mantle of green, when the atmosphere was laden with the sweet aroma of flowers, when nature wore its blindest smiles, when the wild and unbroken country appeared in the hey-day of its youth, in all the radiance of its primitive grandeur.

The history of Decorah from its first settlement has been ably written by Rev. E. Adams, whose comprehensive and humorous production is here given, in preference to what might be less interesting, if written by the author.

"In the month of June, 1846, in the midst of the picture we have just sketched, though at the time somewhat faded out, yet with seventy-five or one hundred Indians gazing upon the spectacle, their tents still standing—with the graves of the dead scattered about where now run our streets and stand our dwellings—in this month of June, 1849, could have been seen an ordinary emigrant wagon, with horses detached, and arrangements being made not for a night's camping merely, but a permanent stay. This of course, as everybody is aware, is what is known the country around as the "Day Family," consisting of nine persons; starting from Tazewell County, Virginia, the year previous, touching at Cassville, Wisconsin, then for a short time on a claim in the east part of the county, near John McKay's, thence to this place. McGregor was then but a landing, but seldom landed at. What some of us have traveled as the old stage road, was but an Indian trail, with only two settlers upon it between here and Monona, at what is now Frankville.

"Beyond this, westward, were but two white families, by the name of Reams and Button. The head of this Button family was suspected of horse-thieving, and was, at an early date, visited by a deputation of nine men from Linn County, anxious that justice should be extended even to the farthest limits of the country then known. No evidence was really found against him; but upon the hint that his absence would be as good as his presence, he soon left, selling his claim to a man by the name of Johnson, of whom the farm was purchased by its present occupant, Mr. Jacob Jewell.

“But to return to the inmates of our emigrant wagon. The first thing, of course, was a covering for the head, and then more permanent arrangements for the winter. A temporary cabin, 16x16, to serve ultimately as a stable, had already, by way of anticipation, been partially erected by some members of the family who selected the site, and this was soon so far completed as to admit of moving in, and the same night a tavern opened on the premises, where from that day to this the hospitalities of the “Winneshiek House” have ever been extended. In that first season, when, by the presence of surveying parties, horse-thief hunters, or the rush of travel on Indian trails (!), the accommodations within were somewhat straightened, the guests, in the mild evenings of our autumnal climate, of course could find a welcome bed on the green grass, just outside, and ample space for the horses as they stood tied to Indian stakes. No need then for the old sign, “Room for Man and Beast;” it was all room, and all the room there was was apparent to everyone. Before winter, however, a more commodious building was erected, the main part 20x25, with a wing attached. This was made of logs, shingled, lathed and plastered,—really, for the time, quite an imposing structure. This is the building known as the “old log house,” and which made its disappearance but a few years since.

“In this connection it may be proper to say that the present ‘Winneshiek House’ was built in the years 1854—5. The frame was hewn from the native timber, the lath and shingles obtained at Lansing, while the siding is of the pine that once skirted the banks of our river, got out at what was known as Carter’s mill, at Plymouth Rock. Considering its size, and the difficulty, at the time, of obtaining and collecting material, no wonder that it was two years in building; completed December 24, 1855. The ‘Decorah House,’ as it was originally built, was finished prior to this, in 1854, and has since been enlarged at different times to its present dimensions. An allusion to the ‘Tremont House,’ finished in 1857, and burned the winter of 1867, gives us a glance at the hotel business amongst us, commenced in that first log house, though perhaps there is another that some one will say ought to be named—‘The Central House.’

“Almost coeval with this branch of business commenced another, which now appears in the history we have commenced. I allude to the improvements of our water powers. In the same season of 1849, there came a man with his family, who, the year previous, on an exploring tour through this region, had seen such visions of mill-wheels, mill-stones, of saw-mills, turning lathes, possibly of woolen mills, even, in connection

with the curves of our river and the adjacent springs, that he had already made his claim and put up his cabin on the square;—a man who, endowed by nature with more than ordinary mechanical skill, has been following up his visions ever since—one who is still frequently upon our streets, the fruits of whose labors all of us are reaping, more or less,—one of those by whom the world is more benefitted than is by the world acknowledged. This man, as, of course, many of you know, was William Painter, a native of Greene County, Ohio.

“His cabin was built upon the property known as the Butler property, nearly opposite the present machine shop, where, as the fruits of his labor, may now be seen the first well dug in town. In his family was the first birth, his son George Patten, born in the fall of 1849, in honor of which, and because he took the name of two sons of the Day family—George, Patten—he afterwards had the present of a town lot. In his milling propensities Mr. Painter commenced immediately in 1849, at what is known as the Spring or Dunning’s mill, soon taking into company with him one Aldridge. He brought a small pair of burrs from Cincinnati, and set them running by the simplest of machinery possible, in a log mill about sixteen feet square, some of the remains of which are still to be seen. The Heivly power was in his claim, but he did not think it best to commence the improvement of this till his means should be more ample and the country better settled. This power, however, was not long to remain in waiting, for soon there came to our town another, the third family, February, 1851, in which there was the same propensity for milling to which we have alluded, as a kind of family trait, true to which, the descendants of this family may still be seen threading our water-courses in search of more powers yet to be improved. I allude now, of course, as many of you again know, to the Morse family, the respected father of which is still among us, whose cheerful face is often greeted with the familiar title of “Uncle Phillip.” He, with his wife and two children, moved in with Mr. Painter, but soon built him a cabin on the back part of the lot on which the Tremont House stood. He built, a year or two afterwards, in August and September, 1852, the first frame dwelling in town, which is still standing, and occupied at present by our fellow-citizen Mr. Driggs (now occupied by Mr. Bonestell), just west of the Tremont stand.

“In his family was the first marriage in town, as the records have it:

“MARRIED—August 22, 1852.—Henry T. Morse to Hannah C. Chase.

“JOHN S. MORSE, *Minister*.

“The Mr. Morse now living in Freeport.



"But we must not by these pleasing items be drawn down our thread of history too rapidly. In the same season that he came, the summer of 1851, Mr. Morse bought of Mr. Painter a portion of the Heivly water power, and commenced the saw mill now upon it, he and Mr. Painter building the dam and race together. Mr. Painter built, about the same time, a grist mill, the frame of which still stands within the walls enclosing the present building. About this time the Spring Mill was sold to its present owner, Mr. Dunning, whose family was the fourth in town. Thus commenced, and to the joint labors of these men—William Painter, Phillip Morse, and E. Dunning—are we indebted for the first beginnings by way of improving the abundant water power with which we are favored, the value of which we do not yet begin to realize, but which is being improved from day to day. No doubt their labors at this early date had much to do in making this a point, as well as drawing hither other branches of manufacture, to which reference may be made in due time.

"In the same year, July 3, 1851, the first lawyer made his appearance. Undertaking to walk out from Lansing, he got lost by the way and stopped the first night at a Norwegian's house, six or eight miles east of this. Starting on the next morning, he came along about noon to the log tavern, and inquired the way to Decorah, rejoicing, no doubt, to be at his journey's end ere he had found it. His name was John B. Onstine. The second of this profession that came out was Dryden Smith; the third, A. B. Webber; the fourth, John L. Burton; the fifth L. Bullis; the sixth, E. E. Cooley, who came October, 1854;—and so on.

"Mention has been made of the houses being built. Of course there were carpenters here at this early date. The first in town was a man by the name of Stevens, who soon left for California, where he has since died. The second was our fellow-citizen Mr. William E. Taylor, who came in November, 1851. He bought the chest and tools of Mr. Stevens, the first brought to town—which chest and many of said tools are doing good service at the present day.

"The mercantile has ever been a prominent interest among us. This, too, was started at an early date in the summer of 1851, by Aaron Newell, with a partner by the name of Derrick. They opened their stock of goods—not a very large one; indeed, some say about a wheelbarrow full—in the smoke-house on the Winneshiek premises. They soon moved, for better accommodations, to a kind of slab shanty, until they could build a real frame building, the first store, and the first frame building, in fact, built in town, advertised and known as the "Pioneer Store,"

at present owned and occupied by the firm of Goddard & Henry, and by them enlarged to its present dimensions. This was completed in the summer of 1852, and was for the time quite a building, furnishing in the second story a public hall called Newell's Hall. Could we but have a few of all the transactions within that hall, of county courts, caucuses, and, I am afraid, of dances too, and all sorts of things, it would give us a pretty good clue to the early history of the times.

[The old "Pioneer Store" building has since burned down, and a large brick building now stands upon the old site, occupied as a store by Ellsworth, Goddard & Co.]

"In connection with law and commerce, the Gospel soon came, in the person of a Methodist preacher, who presented himself at the cabin of Uncle Philip Morse, on the errand, as he said, of looking up the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Being assured that he had found them, he walked in. That night there was preaching in town, and a class soon organized. This preacher was Elder Bishop, and made arrangements to preach monthly, taking Lansing, Monona, and the country about in his circuit. A few weeks after, a congregational minister, Mr. A. M. Eastman, made his appearance and established monthly meetings at the log tavern. Hence sprang the two first churches organized in town. Their subsequent history, the date of organization, the time of building their houses of worship, etc., with a notice of other churches since and more recently formed, would take us further down the history we are pursuing, and require more minuteness than time will permit to-day.

"We were in the year 1851,—quite an eventful year. Let us see what we have: Three log cabins; one hotel; a lawyer and two merchants, partners in trade; with other families and persons that might be named, though the census would not be large; the water power beginning to be improved; regular preaching once a month by two different denominations, and a County Seat, with of course a regular session of the County court (an august body). This year of 1851 is really the most interesting by way of beginnings of things among us, and we might dwell here entirely; but we will come down a few years later by brief a glance, here and there, at what is transpiring.

"In 1852, some new comers are added, and new trades introduced. It was in this year that the first blacksmith shop was started, by an old Californian, who burned his own coal in what he called "Cruson's Hollow." He blew his bellows in a building now occupied by Mr. Golz as cabinet shop; and as he pounded his iron, was somewhat of a dealer in real estate, also. By him the whole block on which the Howell House

stands, now the residence of Mr. Goddard, was purchased for \$20. The block opposite, where is the residence of Mr. Horace Weiser, for \$40. A few additional frame buildings there must have been at that time, though probably not many, as this blacksmith's wife was designated as the "woman that lives in the frame house." His name, as near as can be ascertained, was A. Bradish. He also carried on the tin trade, and had as a hired journeyman, one George C. Winship.

"It was in this year, too, as I think, that another very lucrative business was started, though it gives no pleasure to mention it. But we read that when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also; and the historian must be faithful.

"About this time, down under the hill, in a kind of a spring house, near Day's spring, was a man, (we will not call his name at this time,) boasting that he had "the pure article" for sale, but it was afterwards ascertained that it had been well watered on its way to this place, at Trout Run—a whisky fraud, no doubt. This traffic soon crept up into daylight on Water street (which it has never fairly crossed as it would seem), and was subsequently in the hands of one Gookins, whose establishment not long afterwards was destroyed, and the place for once cleared of liquors. This, however, was more the result of a quarrel among his patrons than a movement of reform among the people. The absence of the spirits was but temporary. To the place, though swept and garnished, they soon returned, with at least seven others added, which have gone on increasing ever since. In justice to this Gookins, however, it ought to be said that there is reason to believe that he became a better man, as some of us used to meet him in prayer meetings, and as one interested in Sabbath Schools. So in the history of the town have some exchanged the business referred to for a better, and to as many as will do likewise will we most heartily give the right hand of welcome.

"In 1853 the population increases. In this year Ammon, Scott & Co. came in—the first to add steam to our water power—the beginning of what has culminated at last in the present foundry and machine shop, an establishment no less useful than ornamental to the place. It was in this year that the town was first laid out, and the original plat made ready for record, August 18, 1853. The man is still living (Judge Price, of Clayton County) who claims the honor of suggesting the idea to the members of the Day family while yet in the log house. The idea, however, was not entirely new to them, though by his encouragement, doubtless, their purpose was strengthened. He claims, too, the credit



of suggesting the name Decorah, and tells how, after supper, he took a piece of chalk and marked out on the table how the town could be laid off.

In 1854 the first school-house was built, the same that now stands on the old site, recently changed in color and fenced for domestic uses. The first teacher employed was a young man in the greenness of his youth, fresh from Vermont, seeking a location for the practice of medicine. He had come in through Monona, and was greatly discouraged by the residents here, so far as the prospects of medical practice was concerned, but he had the offer of the school, with \$30 per month, if he could pass examination. An examining committee was appointed, and a day set for the ordeal. The day came, and with it one of the committee, who examined him, found him qualified, and gave him a certificate. He commenced school, taught a month, flogged a child of one of the directors, and raised quite an excitement in the district thereby. By this time his practice had commenced. He didn't care whether he taught or not. The result was, another man took the school off his hands, and he devoted himself to his profession, which he has modestly followed ever since. His name was H. C. Bulis. The committee-man who examined him and gave him his certificate was Levi Bullis. The new teacher was Charley Allen. That old certificate (by the way, the first ever given in the place) is still kept as a relic of the past. Whether brought out in later times as evidence to the people of qualifications for Senatorial honors, is not ascertained.\*

At the close of this year (1854) let us see, if we can, how the town looks. Our three cabins of 1851 have increased to quite a little village of fifteen or twenty buildings, counting hotels, stores, stables, shops and

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\*The author wishes to say that since the delivery of this discourse a mistake has been discovered in this matter. The school-house was built the year previous (1853) and a school taught in it by a young man who came with his father's family in that year from Crawford County, Pa., and settled at Freeport. After teaching that winter he was for four years the Acting Treasurer of the county, till of age, when he was elected for three successive terms to fill that office, until in the war he served as Captain of Company D, Sixth Iowa Cavalry, after which he became Cashier in the First National Bank, where he may now be found—Mr. T. W. Burdick. To him certainly some credit is due. Since the organization of the county its treasury has never suffered from a single embezzlement or fraud. Mr. Burdick shows his certificate, signed by Mr. H. K. Averill, and a list of his scholars, about forty-six in number, with the names of the parents. He says that he "boarded 'round," taking in his range the families in Cruson's Hollow on the east, and the Moore and Child places on the west, and that such was the growth of trees and underbrush around the school-house, that one could hardly see it at four rods' distance.

buildings of all kinds. On the other side of Dry Run, so-called, to the south and east, stands one now occupied by Dr. Bolles; on Broadway, two—the old school-house, and the one occupied by myself, though less in size then than now. The rest, a dozen or fifteen in number, were scattered along Water Street, commencing with the old building, or a part of it, now occupied by Mr. Keyes for a carpenter shop, including some of the old buildings on the opposite side, a little further up; then up to the hotel stands the Pioneer Store, and so, with a building here and there, on one side of the street or other, up to the cabins of Mr. Painter and Mr. Morse, aforesaid. The population probably was about 100. At this time traces of Indian graves were not all obliterated; a half dozen or so had indeed been leveled to prepare the site of the Winneshiek House, then building.

But here, again, how easy to slip down among the things that we have done, instead of keeping back in the past.

I will detain you by an allusion to only one year more, that of 1855. In this year our town made marked progress. Many new-comers were added, and many new kinds of business introduced; among them the Pioneer Harness Shop was opened by J. C. Spencer.

The first livery stable started was by Clark Kenyon and C. E. Dickerman. Said Dickerman also sold the first drugs, with an assortment of other things, such as could be turned to advantage, though the first regular drug store was opened the year after by E. I. Weiser & Bro.

What gave the place an especial impetus in this year of 1855, was the establishment of the Land Office for the Turkey River Land District. The bill constituting this Land District passed Congress in March, 1855, mainly by the efforts of Gen. Jones, of Dubuque. What consideration any persons in Washington were to receive for getting the office here—how they somehow failed of getting what they expected, and, displeased thereby, aided in removing the office early in 1856, need not be told. Nor need a minute detail of land-office times here be entered upon. They must have been wild and curious times. The office was finally opened the day before Christmas, 1855, office hours from 9 to 12 only, each day. The town was crowded with adventurers from all parts of the country, with a rage for land almost barbarous. For two weeks, until some system was established, entrance was gained to the office by brute force. He who could get his hand upon the handle of the door, and maintain his position until office hours, was first best. The entrance was by an outside stairway leading to the second story. The building used for the office still stands, occupied as a board-

ing-house, one door east of the harness shop of Mr. Noble. The white paint but partially hides the old sign "U. S. Land Office." One night, with the thermometer 35 degrees below zero, a man stationed himself at midnight at the head of the stairs, and endured the bitter cold bravely, for his chance. By morning both his feet were frosted, but still he held his ground. A while after daylight the crowd, gathered behind him down the stairs and out into the street, passed up to him a warm breakfast and hot coffee, in honor of his persistence, and good-naturedly cheered him to hold on, which he did. Sometimes these throngs would begin to gather at 1 o'clock P. M., and stand all night for the next day. At the same time, in the rear of the building was another pair of stairs, and those within the ring could somehow get entrance to the office, and enter all the land they chose by paying the officials something. Head clerks in this way received their hundreds of dollars for a single night's work. This, too, was known. How this company of men ever got through the winter without continued contentions and outbreaks, to say nothing of tearing the office to the ground, as they threatened to do, is indeed a wonder, especially when we are told—and we would not say it if we had not been told so—that the quantity of liquor used that winter was by no means limited. It is also remarkable that during this time not a theft or robbery was known. This is the more so, as the amount of gold, or its equivalent, then in town was almost incredible—some say not less than half a million. In proof of this the man can be produced, and he then but a youth, who affirms that in peculiar circumstances he was constituted by acclamation chief treasurer, to hold in safe keeping for the time being such effects as might be upon the persons of parties present. Belts filled with gold, packages of warrants, etc., were thrown together into a dry-goods box, over which he was to stand guard until the equilibrium of the assembly should be restored, the contents of which box counted out over \$320,000. The circumstances alluded to I need not hint further than to say that it was about Christmas, just as news came that the office was to be really opened. Such a young man, so Stand(r)ing in the esteem of his fellows for sobriety and honesty, deserves to prosper as a retired banker, in the honest calling of a farmer. We wish him a railroad close to his house.

"In this winter and spring of 1855-6 nine banking houses were in full operation, two of which remain—that of Weiser & Filbert, now Winneshiek County Bank, and one of Easton, Cooley & Co., now First National Bank. Heavy stocks of goods were opened. The population and business had taken such a start that Decorah was the chief



center of trade for the whole region round about, even for a hundred miles or more, especially north and west.

"When the Land office was removed, in 1856, some people and some things left with it, but many staid. The town got a start, and we kept on growing. No railroad, indeed, yet, but still we live. I will follow down the history no further. But you will allow me here to note one or two interesting and a few first things with which I have met that have failed to find a place in the history given.

"William Painter ate watermelons that grew on a patch of ground at the lower end of town in the street near Mr. Keyes's carpenter shop, from seeds scattered by the Indians at a dance and feast held there. A. Bradish feasted on strawberries plucked upon the lot where he built his shop, now Mr. Golz's cabinet shop.

"To Deacon James Smith belongs the honor of making the first plow manufactured in town, in a blacksmith shop which he erected, now used as a stable in the rear of Mr. Eckart's cabinet shop. He also ironed the first buggy made in town. The buggy was made by an enterprising Welshman, who came to town in 1854. He, like the first lawyer, walked out from Lansing to take a view, liked the prospect, and soon commenced a business that took the shape of agricultural ware-rooms, on which is the name of "G. Phelps."

"The oldest cat in town, probably, is one called "Bob" (it is 13 years of age) whose kittenhood commenced in the mercantile life in the store of Dr. Green and Hazelett, in West Decorah, thence to the old Dicker-man stand, now the leather store of Mr. Cyrus Adams, thence to its present quarters in the store next the postoffice, with Father Green. With much wisdom from the past, with an amiable and serene old age, do they jog along in life together.

"Of the equine race, the oldest resident probably is one called "Dandy," brought to this place in the energies of a 6-year-old by Mr. Filbert, now owned by Mr. Weiser, still powerful in his old age; a good moral horse, in one respect at least, never by his masters subjected to the infections of the race-course—what we wish could be said of all horses.

"The first Court was held in the Log Tavern, on the first Monday in September, 1851. There being no business, Court adjourned until the following October. At this time the county revenues were seventy cents. Warrants issued, \$6.

"The first mail entered town June, 1851, and consisted of one letter and two newspapers. Lewis Harkins, mail-carrier; C. Day, post-

master. It is said in those days he carried the postoffice in his pocket.

"I have already mentioned the first well dug, the first birth, and the first marriage. The first death was of a Mr. Chase, who died in the fall of 1852, and was buried, of course where we used to bury our dead—in the brush on private property (we are almost ashamed to tell where and how) till the enterprise of Mr. James E. Simpson, in 1861, gave us a cemetery.

"Thus, my friends, have I given you a few items of our early history. Some of you, doubtless, see *mistakes* and omissions. You will pardon these. I have given simply what I have met with in my inquiries made at snatches of time.

"Allow me a few words in conclusion. Gratitude is due to God to-day for His kind and preserving care. Some of the earlier residents, indeed, are no more. Of the Day family, five have been taken: two sons, one in Oregon and one in California, two daughters, one 14 and the other a little older, dying while attending school at Madison, Wis. Father Day we buried in the autumn of 1860; Aaron Newell in 1862. And so might we mention others. But yet a goodly number of the older residents are still with us, and many not here are in other places.

"In 1857, just nine brief years from the first settlement made in Decorah, a wonderful transformation had taken place. The whites, armed as they were with the advantages of a superior civilization, made strides in progression that were wonderful. The beautiful valley, first seen by the Days, had changed from an Indian paradise to an Israelite's Garden of Eden. The beautiful carpet of green which the land had so long worn in its wild and natural state had been upturned by the science of agriculture, and made productive with a luxurious growth of vegetation unknown to it before. Everywhere the change was marked. In place of the Indian teepee, the valley was dotted with the homes of the white man. Hardly a trace of the red man remained. The umbrageous woodland along the banks of the Iowa, in which Nature's child had his home, had disappeared. The rushing waters of the Iowa had been bridled, and made to do service in grinding the farmer's grist. In short, the metamorphose was complete. Where but a few years before Indian trails had been, were now to be seen the busy streets of a prosperous town."

Decorah knew no check in its growth and prosperity after securing to itself the county government. That event assured its good fortune. It gave to the town a healthy stimulus. A town large enough to aspire to the dignity of a land office, and a county seat at that, certainly required

a newspaper as its exponent and representative to the outer world. Consequently we find one Tracy, in 1856, issuing his prospectus, and, after a time, regular issues of the Decorah *Chronicle*. Tracy was the nominal editor, but it was well understood that a genial lawyer with a literary turn, named M. V. Burdick, really wielded the gray goose-quill. Its fortunes were varied, as pioneer enterprises of this kind usually are, but its legitimate successor exists to-day in the Decorah *Republican*. A complete history of the newspaper enterprises would make an interesting chapter of itself. The *Republican* is the oldest paper published in the county. Wesley Bailey & Son succeeded to the control of this paper in 1860, and in 1867 the title passed to A. K. Bailey & Bro., which firm has ever since continued its publication. There have been twenty-five distinct enterprises of this kind within the past twenty years, with no less than forty-three different proprietors, of which the Decorah *Republican*, the *Bee*, the *Radical*, the *Posten*, *For Hjemmet* and the *Church Weekly*, all issued at Decorah, and the *Guardian*, at Calmar, are the sole survivors. The *Posten* is the only Norwegian newspaper published in the State. It is ably edited by B. Annudson. In 1866, George Hazlitt commenced the publication of the Winneshiek *Register*. The *Bee* of to-day, edited by H. Woodruff, is its legitimate successor.

The ambition of the town increased with its growth until, in 1857, it clothed itself in the garb of an organization. The records show the date of the first meeting for this purpose to have taken place on the first Monday of April, 1857. As a result of this convention, an election was held on the 30th of June following, and Hon. E. E. Cooley was duly elected President.

The town derived much of its trade from the travel over the road connecting it with Frankville, which latter place was striving for the superiority, with very flattering prospects. There were but few main routes leading to the outward world, but these were extensively traveled. Yet, the facilities for commercial intercourse were limited. On account of no more rapid transit than stages, trade was carried on at a great disadvantage.

An act of incorporation was procured for Decorah on the 6th of March, 1871, and as a result of the first city election the following officers were chosen :

*Mayor*—Charles F. Allen.

*Clerk*—G. W. Patterson.

*Treasurer*—E. I. Weiser.

*City Attorney*—E. E. Cooley.



*Marshal*—John T. Baker.

*Aldermen*—G. O. Rusted, G. W. Adams, N. Burdick, John Greer, J. L. Pennington, A. D. Thomas, J. H. Montgomery, O. J. Clark.

By becoming a corporation, the young city secured for itself many advantages, which proved more beneficial than at first supposed.

The old settlers exhibited their good judgment in the selection of Decorah as the county seat, which has proved itself in more than one way. One of the strongest evidences of this fact is the excellent water power that abounds in and about the place. There are no less than ten good water powers, and eight of them are in active operation in different kinds of manufactures. At present there is fully \$500,000 invested in these interests at Decorah, among which are five flouring mills, one woolen mill, two machine shops, two manufactories of agricultural implements, two breweries, one soap factory, one stone and marble shop, Hutchinson's steam cracker-bakery, steam packing-house, egg-packery, and paper-mill.

Ammon, Scott & Co., manufacturers of agricultural implements, founders, machinists and millers, is the largest manufactory and combine the greatest variety of any in the city. The agricultural works were founded by John Ammon, in 1853, who came here from Quincy, Ill., among the first settlers. The milling business was established in 1870, the Company purchasing the mill of Henry Heivly, formerly known as the Painter Mill. George W. Scott became a member of the firm in 1870. The interests of the firm were then incorporated in a stock company, which has ever since continued, with John Ammon, President; George W. Scott, Secretary. Mr. Scott came originally from Pittsburg, Pa., where he received an excellent business education, and the success of the Company is in a great measure credited to his management.

The Decorah Woolen Mill Company built a large four story brick factory, in 1867, at a cost, inclusive of machinery, of \$35,200. The Ice Cave Flouring Mill is the largest in the county. It has six run of stone, and was built by Greer & Hunter, in 1874, at a cost of \$40,000. They manufacture flour for the Eastern market exclusively.

The Trout Run Woolen Mill, erected at a cost of \$10,000, and built by A. A. Aiken, in the years 1866 and 1867, was the first manufactory of this character in the county. It was destroyed by fire in November, 1874.

The banking interests are well represented in Decorah:

1. The First National Bank, J. H. Easton, President; T. W. Burdick,

Cashier. This bank was first established in 1854, under the firm name of Easton, Cooley & Co., and was one of the few banks that survived the financial crash of 1857. In 1870 it was changed to the firm of Wm. L. Easton & Son, the latter being J. H. Easton, who is now president, and under the national banking act of 1864, became the First National Bank of Decorah. The resources of the bank, as reported in 1874, were \$271,357.87; circulation, \$66,500.

2. The Savings Bank was established in 1873, and has met with very flattering success.

3. The Winneshiek County Bank, H. S. Weiser & Co., is the oldest bank in the state that has had a continuous existence under the same name. It is doing a lucrative business, and has been of great service in aiding the developement of this northern section of Iowa.

The banking house of S. W. Matteson, successor to C. E. Dickerman, was established in 1867. Collateral loans and commercial paper form the leading feature of this bank.

The citizens of Decorah are imbued with a high estimation of education. They almost to a unit endorse the American system of public schools. And first among the educational institutions of the place is its graded Public School. The school building, inclusive of furniture, cost \$20,000. The school is divided into nine grades, and all the branches from the primary to the high school course are taught. The school possesses a philosophic apparatus.

The Decorah Institute is another important educational institution. This institute is under the management of Prof. J. Breckenridge, a fine educator, and assisted by an efficient corps of assistants. This institution offers a rare inducement to the young man or woman seeking an education, and parties from the surrounding counties and Minnesota avail themselves of the opportunity.

The Catholics also have a select or parochial school in the city, which is well attended.

The Norwegians have what is called the Norwegian Lutheran College. It is supported by the contributions of Norwegian congregations throughout the country, chiefly those of the Northwestern States. The building stands on an elevated site, a little west of the city of Decorah, and has connected with it an area of thirty-two acres of beautiful rolling ground. It is an imposing structure, in the Norman gothic style of architecture, and was erected at a cost of \$100,000. The main building and one wing were erected in 1865; the other wing, com-

pleting the original design, was added in 1874. The course of study embraces a preparatory department and a full college course.

This institution has had its infancy as well as its days of prosperity. Its growth, however, has been steady and permanent. It was first opened at LaCrosse, Wis., in 1861, was transferred here in 1862, and moved into the present building in 1865. In LaCrosse it began with eleven students. It had thirty-two on its commencement in Decorah, and eighty on its entrance into the present building. Now it has over 200. A class has been graduated every year since 1866. There are eight professors and two assistant professors. L. Larson, President; J. D. Jacobson, Secretary. Few institutions are more creditable to the young and growing Northwest than this, which has been erected by the intelligent zeal and generosity of one class of our foreign population, who evince, by this enterprise, that they are awake to the spirit of our civilization, and mean to keep abreast of the times.

No less than six church-spires point heavenward, in evidence of the love borne by a grateful people for the all-wise Giver of earthly bounties, and through whose kind providence they have tasted prosperity. Many of the church buildings are costly and elegant. The finest is the Norwegian Lutheran, located on Broadway, near the handsome residence of Mrs. H. S. Weiser. This building is one of brick and stone masonry work, and was erected at a cost of \$20,000. It was built in 1875-6. The next finest church edifice is the Methodist Episcopal, recently completed at a cost of \$13,000, and dedicated December 20, 1874. The Congregational Church was built in 1860, and dedicated in November. It cost about \$6,000. The Catholic Church was erected at a cost of about \$7,000, in 1865. The Christian Church occupies the old Methodist building, the first church built in Decorah.

The Episcopal Church, located on Broadway, and completed in 1876 at a cost of \$5,000, is a model of neatness and taste.

To-day Decorah is the gem city of Northern Iowa. Its business interests are in a flourishing condition. Its people are prosperous. Nature and art have lavishly expended their forces in its behalf. Its peculiar location, rich natural resources, and refined society conspire to make it a city desirable to inhabit. Its rapid growth, and almost unparalleled prosperity in the past, threatens even to be outdone in the future. Surely, we have a city of which to feel proud.



## CHAPTER XII.

## MONEEK.

*The Story of a Defunct Town—Moneek—The Pioneer Settlers—Their Nearest Neighbors—Their Hospitality—Paddle His Own Canoe—The First Merchant—The Village Smithy—Medicine and the Clergy—Postal Facilities—An Incident—An Influx of Immigrants—What Moneek was in 1853—Its Greatest Prosperity—Its Decline—Busy, Bustling Fellow—A Deserted Village.*

“Those who are familiar with the early history of the county, will remember that when its organization was perfected, the most flourishing settlement was neither Decorah or Fort Atkinson. And those who have read the previous chapters contained herein, and Rev. E. Adams’ ‘First things of Decorah,’ will remember that there is good evidence that the residents of both these places were evidently afraid of that third town. The latter, in examination of the records and witnesses, did not venture to inquire deeply into the first county seat vote, and he intimates pretty plainly that sharp practice was resorted to in order to shut out the overwhelming vote which this third town might secure for the coveted honors and the profits arising from its pre-eminence as the county town. The name of this town was Moneek, and in writing township histories, a chapter is devoted to it, because it evidently was, in 1850, 1851 and 1852, the foremost town in the county; and because a veritable history cannot be complete without the story of its rise, growth and decay. The records show it the oldest town in the county, and there is every reason to believe that at one time its opportunities were most favorable, and it bade fair to lead any that might be started as its rival. The recorded plat shows that it was surveyed in January, 1852, although the plat was not recorded until the November following. Decorah was not platted and recorded until the year following, viz: August, 1853. Frankville came into existence similarly, in October, and was followed by Freeport in May, and Calmar in November, 1854, and Ossian in April, 1855. That year saw a number of other towns begun, some of which have a lively existence still; while others never got beyond the

record in progress toward village existence. This seniority is enough of itself to give Moneek prominence in a history of the county.

"It was situated on the north fork of the Yellow River, on the southwest quarter of Section 1, in Bloomfield township. Tremendous hills, well wooded, surrounded it, and it nestled cosily in the valley of the river, on a site that originally must have been charmingly beautiful.

"The pioneer settlers were Moses S. McSwain and Abner DeCow. To these may be added John DeCow, who joined them a year later. All of them were Canadians, but McSwain resided for a while previous in Illinois, and probably obtained there some ideas of the western methods of doing things. They had a town site in their eyes from the commencement. The two arrived at Moneek in July, 1849, and lived in their tent wagons until a log house 12x16 was built. They commenced the same season to build a saw mill, which was afterwards noted all over the adjacent country as *the* mill.

"Their nearest neighbors were Joel Post, at Postville, and two families who had "squatted" on the military road. These were David Reed, the first County Judge, and a man named Campbell. Besides these, there were the Hawks, and Isaac Callender, over in Frankville. R. Tillotson joined them the same year. He was a millwright, and helped them to build the mill. This was completed in July, 1850. In the spring of the latter year, Russell Dean and Geo. Blake, with their families—also from Canada—joined the new settlement. June 29th, 1850, John DeCow, ex-County Judge, and since Member of the State Legislature, also moved in, he, too, coming from Canada. He found all of the four families occupying the one log house above mentioned, yet it was large enough to receive the fifth family until another house, the second in the embryo city, could be built.

"The hospitality of the early settlers was unbounded. Like the modern omnibus, their old log habitations had always room for more, and the new comer surely received a warm welcome. How this small building accommodated the five families during the six weeks in which he was putting up his own house, the Judge can now scarcely tell. He does tell that he brought a few provisions with him, and when these were exhausted he was compelled to go to Elkader and McGregor for more. After making his purchases and buying a cow, price \$20, he had left, as working capital, the magnificent sum of \$4.30. Returning home, he hired out to McSwain and Abner DeCow, who were partners, to work at the mill for \$18 per month. This engagement lasted only

one month and twenty-two days, when he struck out to paddle his own canoe.

"The same year Blake went south, and Dean went west about a mile and a half and put up log houses on "claims" of their own.

"In the spring of 1851 the first frame building was built by A. and J. DeCow. This they rented to a man named Johnson, from Illinois, who brought on a stock of goods, and became the first merchant.

"His capital was small, the amount of trade limited, and he soon 'busted.' McSwain bought out his remnants, and sold out the stock. Having neither money or credit with which to purchase more goods, the mercantile business came to an end for the time being.

"The same year John Duff came along, liked the looks of the settlement, and built a blacksmith shop, which he sold in the fall to Phil. Lathrop (the same who was landlord at Frankville, seventeen years ago) The latter united butchering to blacksmithing, and soon after added merchandizing. About the same time he built a house, which, when completed, was opened for the entertainment of man and beast, and the village had a hotel. It was not large, but in those days it was thought to be 'a good one.'

"In 1852, George Crawford, who afterwards went to Burr Oak Springs, —another defunct town of early promise—became a member of the community. He was, likewise, a Canadian, and brought goods, mostly cloths, with him. He was a tailor by trade, and did a thriving business, which soon required the aid of a journeyman. He soon added groceries to his stock—dry and 'wet'—and prospered as long as Moneek was in its glory.

"James F. Andrews, a retired Baptist minister, with two sons, and their families, became residents in the same year. They added another store. One of the sons was a doctor, and so the town secured the benefit of clergy and medicine by this really large acquisition. They, however, only remained about a year. The town was outgrowing the settlements, and was not large enough to support so many 'middlemen.'

"Louis Boughner, also a Canadian, but of German descent, came along in the same year, opened his kit of tools, and sat down upon his shoemaker's bench. That winter the hamlet began to feel as though it was of sufficient importance to be recognized by the General Government, and postal facilities were demanded. During the winter, or the following spring, these were secured, and Boughner had so far won the confidence of the people that he was chosen to serve as the village Nasby. The office was supplied by 'Winneshtek'—a postoffice then



situated between Castalia and Postville, at which Mr. D. A. Reed, of Decorah, was then deputy postmaster. It is related by Mr. Reed, that his brother-in-law was postmaster, and he served as deputy. By this arrangement the mail-carrier or any one calling for mail was sure to find one or the other at home. The convenience of this arrangement was very great, because the postmaster and his deputy only lived a quarter of a mile apart.

"That year, 1852, saw a large increase to the settlers outside, as well as in Moneek. Among those who came were Col. D. D. Webster, David Huff, Philip Husted, Andrew Stewart, and John W. Smith. The first three still reside on the farms they occupied, surrounded by large families, and prosperity. About that time Dr. Riddle, an Ohioan, settled in Moneek. He now lives at or near Nora Springs. Dr. A. B. Hanna, now of Elkader, followed a year or two later, and succeeded Boughner as postmaster, holding the office until it was thrown up, some time in the sixties.

"In 1853, Geo. W. Esty settled there, and is to-day the sole owner of what was then a most thriving village. He came from New York, and found the village to consist of eight dwellings, one saw mill owned and operated by Abner DeCow, one blacksmith shop, worked by John Duff, Jr., two stores, kept by James F. Andrews and George Crawford, a shoe shop and postoffice, managed by Boughner, and two liquor saloons, one kept by George Crawford as an adjunct to his store, and the other by a man named Walker, who enlisted when the war broke out, and died in battle. The Yellow River then contained double the water it now possesses, and the saw mill was easily able to run five months in the year. The timber in the neighborhood was superior, and this won the mill a wide and high reputation.

"At the time of its greatest prosperity, Moneek contained scarcely a score of buildings, divided into dwellings, shops, &c. But it had a large outlying settlement; and it was this, probably, that made it feared by the dwellers in Decorah and Fort Atkinson when the county seat vote was taken. They were sufficiently numerous to give the other two points a 'close call' in a fair poll. Failing to receive poll book in time, the people of Moneek held an election with as much form and regularity as they could devise, but not sufficiently so as to prevent the vote from being thrown out. What might have been, if there had been more determined watchfulness by the people of the village, it is impossible to tell. What did happen is very easy to narrate.

"Its decline began in 1855. Judge DeCow saw it commencing in

1854, and sold his 160 acre claim adjoining the plat for \$1,800, to a man named Barnum. The place has been sold twice since, but never for as much money. With the proceeds the Judge settled on the place he now owns, and is very thankful that he took that tide in his life at its flood. The tax list of 1855 shows that the Moneek merchant's assessment was \$800 for four lots; and Abner DeCow's tavern stand was valued at the same figure. In Decorah, at that time, there were only four assessments of greater amount, and two others only equaled it. The causes for its decline were few and simple. Settlers were thronging into the country and opening other sections. Post routes and lines of communication were being established. Nature was rather against Moneek. It was nestled away in the valley of the Yellow River, surrounded by mountainous hills, and not easy of access. Notwithstanding this, the founders of the place evidently thought Moneek had such a start that its growth was sure and permanent; that roads must come to them; they could not be 'left out in the cold.' One thing is certain, that while the post routes were being established, the Moneekers were too busy with their 'corner lots.' In the meanwhile, a busy, bustling fellow named Frank Teabout, had settled on the ridge, and, when the state road was run, he was looking after his interests. The line was established on the ridge; Frankville sprang into existence; and ere they knew it, the great tide of immigration which set in was sweeping by them, along the ridge road, but bringing no grists to be tolled and ground for the benefit of Moneek. It had its method of egress, but no artery of trade. The result was certain. Those who were in trade one by one sold out, or abandoned the place; and by the time it was ten years old it was indeed a deserted village. Early in the sixties its postoffice was thrown up.

"McSwain remained until about 1865, when he left, principally because the neighborhood was getting too warm for him. The rights of property were not rigidly observed by everybody about that time; but who it was that was careless as to other people's titles, was not known. At last an old buggy was missed from the road where it had been left. Inquiry was made as to its whereabouts for several days ineffectually, until Judge DeCow went down to McSwain's to look at some sheep the latter wished to sell. As the families had not visited for a long time, he took his wife and children along. During the day the children went to the straw stack to play, and pleased themselves by climbing to the top, and sliding down the stack. McSwain's boy, however, cautioned the Judge's son not to slide down on a certain side, because there was a wagon under there! This excited his curiosity enough so that he

remembered to tell his father about it on the way home in the evening. It instantly struck the father—there is the missing buggy! The suspicion was more than hinted to the owner, and a search proved it to be the identical buggy. McSwain settled the matter, but used afterwards to charge the sheep with being the sole cause of the difficulty. He reasoned it out somewhat after this manner: If he had not owned the sheep and wanted to sell them, the Judge would not have paid him that visit; the boys would not have been sliding down the straw stack; the buggy would have remained hid until he could have run it off. Ergo: the sheep were wholly to blame!

“This discovery gave the neighbors cause to suspicion McSwain whenever anything was missing, and as there was considerable horse-thieving going on about that time, it became too unpleasant a place to stay. As soon as he could dispose of his property he folded his tents, and hied away to new fields.

“The plat of the village was vacated in 18—, and it is now part of a good farm, which a clever, thorough going farmer, Mr. G. W. Esty, above mentioned, annually plows, sows and reaps. Occasionally a new comer inquires, ‘Where was Moneek?’ and the query calls up a smile on the face of an old settler, as he cheerfully answers and thinks of the swath it cut in the years which are so recent, and yet in the hurry-scurry of more important events, seem much longer than a fifth of a century ago.”



## CHAPTER XIII.

## SPRINGFIELD, PLEASANT AND HIGHLAND TOWNSHIPS.

*First Norwegian Settlers—The Anderson Party Settle in Springfield Township—The Johnson Party Follow Close After—The First Settlers of Pleasant Township—A Man with Many Offices—First Blacksmith—Bartolf Oleson—First School House and Church—Hon. Ole Nelson—Highland Township—Its First Settlers—The Prosperity of its Citizens—How Lars Oleson Made His Money—He Dies Worth \$100,000—The Organization of the First School District.*

From the most reliable information, it would seem that the first immigration of Norwegian settlers came in the year 1850. But to whom to accord the honor of being the first actual settlers—whether to Thor Peterson and his party, who afterward settled in Calmar Township—or to the Erick Anderson party, who settled in Springfield Township, is a question. The Anderson party emigrated from Dane County, Wis., and included the following persons: Halvor Hulverson, Ole Gullickson, Knudt Anderson, Ole and Staale Tostenson. This company was joined at Prairie du Chien by Ole Lomen and Andrew Lomen. Mr. Erick Anderson served the party as guide and interpreter.

The Anderson party finding land in Springfield Township that suited them, took up their claims thereon in June, 1850. But it seems that the Peterson party had preceded them by a few days, and had laid claim to the very land on which Anderson's company had squatted. At that time there was a county organization for the protection of settlers against claim-jumpers, if such they can be called.

It was an imperative law with this association that the man who first registered his claim at Moneek had a perfect title to the same. The Peterson party demanded that the Anderson party move off what they called their claims; but the other party was determined not to surrender their claims until obliged to, and consequently they immediately dispatched a representative to Moneek, whose duty it was to ascertain if the Peterson party had registered their claims. On exami-

nation, he found that no registration had been made, and he took advantage of their tardiness, and registered the claims for his party. The matter was finally compromised, the Anderson party paying some indemnity for their usurpation.

The July following a fresh band of immigrants made settlements in Springfield and vicinity. The names of the heads of these families were as follows: Nelson Johnson, Germund Johnson, A. Simonson, Toleff Simonson, Andrew Houge, John Johnson, Knud G. Opdahl, Ole Tosteson, Mikkell Omlie. A. K. Anderson and John Thune were young men at the time.

Engebret Peterson Haugen followed these in October, after having spent the summer in traveling over portions of Wisconsin and Minnesota. He actually squatted on a claim back of Red Wing, but could not hold it because it was still Indian territory. Coming down the river, he heard of these fellow countrymen, and came out here. He liked the country, and settled on the magnificent farm still belonging to his estate. This farm was the old H. M. Rice trading-post. The store used by Rice was standing, and for five years later served Mr. Haugen as a dwelling. His family, however, did not arrive until May following. They came from Beloit, where they had located in 1842, when that territory was new. Peter E. Haugen, the son, was a boy 16 years of age when the family removed to Iowa. They came direct from Norway in 1842. Inasmuch as immigration from that country did not commence until 1838, Mr. Haugen can be called a pioneer settler in the fullest sense of the term.

In the year 1850, two Germans from Pennsylvania, viz: John Klontz and Wm. Vale, pitched their tents in the northwest corner of Pleasant Township, Vale choosing for his homestead what has since been known as the Locust Lane Farm, deriving its name from the locust trees that were planted on each side of the road immediately after the land was fenced in. John Klontz took up his ranch on the south side of Vale, and both went to work with indomitable energy. They soon had large fields, and a market for all they had to sell at their very doors. They literally coined money, as everything they had to sell brought them good prices. Mr. Vale seems to have been the literary man of the two, for he at one time enjoyed the privilege of holding all the township offices, except Constable, at one and the same time. He was the first Justice of the Peace, the first Assessor, and the first Clerk the township had. He also built the first brick dwelling house in Winneshiek County.

Klontz and Vale have both since sold their farms and moved to

Missouri. In the the following year the first influx of Norwegians commenced. They were : Hover Evenson, Ole Magneson, and Erick Erickson, who came here from Cambridge, Dane County, Wis., and Peter K. Langland, Lewis Peterson, Knudt K. Liquen and K. Erickson, from Illinois. We will now take up these persons separately, as they all figured in the early development of the county.

Hover Evenson was the first blacksmith in the northern part of the county, and as such he enjoyed the trade of the whole country for miles around. But, as there was not enough business to keep him employed, he also improved his homestead. He long since abandoned his trade, and attended exclusively to farming, which has paid him a rich reward, as he is one of the wealthiest farmers of his township.

Ole Magneson and E. Erickson settled in the northeastern corner of the township. The latter is still on his old homestead, living in a house which has become somewhat noted from the fact that it is all built from one pine tree. The walls are a solid plank, six inches thick, and only three such planks from the floor to the ceiling in the first story and two above. The floors, roof-boards, window and door casings are from the same tree. It was all sawed up with a hand-saw, as the logs could not be moved from the place where the tree grew, on Pine Creek. Ole Magneson was a very thrifty farmer. He introduced the first reaper into the neighborhood, and was also the owner of the first threshing-machine in that township.

Next in order comes Peter K. Langland, who settled on Section 3, and at one time was the owner of almost the whole section. When he settled in Pleasant Township he had two boys and one girl, but has since become father to twenty-four, of whom only two or three are now living. His two boys grew up to manhood, but both of them came to their death by accidents. One was caught in the tumbling-rod of a threshing-machine, and literally torn to pieces. The oldest was crushed to death by the tipping of a load of lumber.

I must not forget to mention Knudt K. Liquen. To show what a man can do if he attends strictly to his business : He came here without a cent in his pocket. He was still in debt for his fare from Norway to this country to a lady friend, who paid his passage for him. Liquen picked out his land in Section 2. But what should he do? Still in debt, and no way of getting money. A friend suggested that he propose to the young lady who had paid his fare, and thus get his first debt paid. He immediately acted on the suggestion, and started back to Illinois, where the object of his search resided. He walked the whole



distance, some 250 miles. He was successful in his mission, and brought back his bonny bride (who was his senior by five or six years) to the wilds of Iowa, and settled down on his claim, where he has since lived. He is now the owner of nearly a section of the best land in Pleasant, and, by leading a strictly temperate life, is to-day one of the most respected and wealthiest farmers in that township.

In the year 1853 there was another influx from Dane County, Wis., prominent among whom were Bottolf Olson, Magne Langland, H. Hendrickson, Sven Olson, Ole Thorson, and others. Their history may be stated as a general one. All of them were poor when they first came, and had to struggle hard for a living, but are now all well-to-do farmers and fathers of large and respected families, some of whom have occupied responsible positions in society. The family of Bottolf Olson is deserving of special mention. He had three boys and three girls, four of whom were of age when he settled in Pleasant. The two oldest boys did not remain on the homestead very long, but shifted for themselves. The two young men were never inside of a school-house, but were soon masters of the language, that they could read and write readily. In 1858 Ole B. Olson was one of the first settlers of Dakota Territory, and was elected the first Judge of the territory, which position he occupied until his death, in 1875. Erick B. Olson, the younger brother, was one of the first four men who climbed the mountains of Colorado in search of gold, in 1859, and is still a resident of Gold Hill, Colorado. The rest of the family is still in Pleasant, except the old lady, who died a few years ago.

I will now take the reader back to a kind of general history of the township. The first school house was built at Locust Lane, in 1854, and served, also, as a church for every denomination. The second school house that was built is still standing, and is known as the Ellingson school house. This was built of logs, quite large, and intended to serve as a church for the Lutheran congregation that was then organized in connection with Highland and Spring Grove. It was built mostly by private funds; every farmer would bring so many logs and work so many days. This district consisted of portions of four townships, viz: Pleasant and Highland, in Winneshiek, and Waterloo and Hanover, in Allamakee. The first school was taught by one James Lennon, of Frankville township, when all the big boys and girls attended school, apparently more for fun than for study. The late Hon. Ole Nelson taught the first school in this house, and was also the first Norwegian Representative in the Iowa Legislature.

In 1855 and 1856, almost all the land was taken up, and what was not was bought up by speculators when the land office was in Decorah. Among those who came later may be mentioned K. Thompson, who became sheriff of this county in 1870, and was as good an officer as the county ever had. Also Peter Sampson, O. W. Ellingson, the Johnson Brothers (of whom there were seven at one time) who are all well and favorably known in the township. There is also another fact worth mentioning, and that is this, that almost every one of the pioneers that came into the township in the years 1852-3-4, with the exception of one or two, are still living on their old homesteads, which shows that the pioneers must have been a strong, healthy and vigorous set of men.

Previous to the year 1851, Highland Township was a wild and unsettled region, with the vast country lying west of it. But in that year, while the savages were still now and then to be seen in considerable numbers, three young men—Erick Davidson, Magne Nelson and Hagen Mastad—immigrated, in the spring, from Dane County, Wis., and some time in June, of that year, settled about one mile north of where Highlandville is now situated. For about one year these three young men held undisputed control of the country for miles around. In the spring of 1852 there was quite an influx of immigration, and among the most notable were the Arnesons, Knudt Bjorgo, M. John, Nels Nelson, Sr., with a family of three boys, viz: Andrew, Ole and Nels, Jr., who have played quite a conspicuous part in the history of Highland Township. In the same year Albert Stoneson made his appearance with a blooming young bride, and commenced housekeeping and selected his homestead a little north of the three that first settled here. He, with all the rest of them, had no means to speak of; but he went diligently to work, and soon made himself independent, and has long been one of the wealthiest farmers of this township. He is now surrounded by a large family of young men and women.

In the years following there were quite a number that came to Highland Township, among the most notable of whom was E. Berg, father of the late Hon. K. Berg and Rev. J. Berg. K. Berg had preceded his father to this country, and had made his home, before his father's arrival here, in Dane County, Wis.

When Decorah enjoyed the palmy days of the United States Land Office, Highland Township suffered with the rest of the county in respect to her unoccupied lands. Every acre was gobbled up by speculators, and great was the struggle among the squatters who had not already a United States patent on their homestead. A great number

lost their land, as they were not able to borrow money at the then ruling rate of interest, which was 40 per cent. The immigration then ceased for quite a while, and was almost at a standstill till 1860, or the beginning of the War of the Rebellion. But in the meantime the pioneers of Highland had not been idle. Most of them had become well-to-do farmers, and many of them were already on the road to wealth, of whom I must not forget to mention Lars Olson, who came from Muskegon here in the year 1851 with only a few hundred dollars. He began to lend his money at 40 per cent, and in the short space of twenty years had amassed a fortune of almost \$100,000, without any kind of speculation whatever. Olson died about three years ago, and his money is divided among his large family of ten boys and girls, who are scattered over the southern part of Minnesota.

About the year 1856, a school district was organized, consisting of almost the whole township. At that time the township was not very thickly settled. In the spring of 1857 a small log school-house was erected, which has long since given place to a large and commodious frame building, with all the modern improvements. It was in this old log school-house that the late Prof. Berg taught his first English school, and where K. Bjorgo, Jr., learned his A B C's. He is now a young minister of the Lutheran Synod, of marked ability, having few equals and no superiors among the younger ministers. Martha K. Bjorgo was the first child born in the township.

In 1857 a Lutheran congregation was organized in Pleasant and Highland Townships, and they, in conjunction with Spring Grove, Minn., called C. L. Clauson as their spiritual adviser. He served the two congregations for some time; but his labors became too arduous, and the congregations parted, about three years after their organization, Spring Grove retaining the minister, who only lived a few years longer, he being the first Lutheran minister that died in this country.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## FRANKVILLE.

*An Influx of Immigration—Frank Teabout, the Founder of Frankville—First Merchant at Frankville—The Emigrant Store—Poverty Point—"Demijohn Arguments"—Trout River—Benj. Beard—The Lathrop House—The Presbyterian Church—Twice Waylaid and Once Robbed—Suspicious Characters—First Justice of the Peace—Frankville Early Contributes Her Quota of County Officers—Frankville's First Saw Mill—First Grist Mill—The Religious Revival of 1857--The Railroad Seals its Fate.*

In 1851-2-3 the county was deluged with a healthy immigration. They were men noted for their integrity, perseverance, and a determination to succeed. They came in their covered carts drawn by oxen, with the family support hitched on behind in the possession of a good milch cow. A great many of these men found their homes on Washington Prairie. The earliest pioneers were the Hawkes, Moses Hostetter, J. Callender, Christopher Anderson Estrem, Wm. Padden, the Rosa family, Jacob Duff, Walter Rathbun, and others whose names I have been unable to obtain. These came in 1850 or early in 1851. Among the number who drifted into the county in the years 1851-2 were J. T. Atkins, the Beards and Cutlers, John and James D. McKay, Joel Pagin, Wm. Birdsell, Philip Husted, Isaac Birdsell, Erick Olson Bakke, James B. Schenck, and others too numerous to mention. This immigration had the effect to change the wild prairie of a year or two previous into the garden of Winneshiek County. The construction of houses was carried on until they dotted the prairie from every conceivable point of the compass. Under the strenuous efforts of the settlers the county began to assume a civilized garb. The native heath of the bounding deer was uncovered for agricultural purposes, and the lairs of the vicious timber-wolves converted to the uses of man. The county bore the appearance of health, wealth and prosperity. Although not possessing all the luxuries of life, actual want never confronted them. With the

small crops they were enabled to raise, and the abundance of game easily secured, they weathered through the first years very comfortably. Deer were numerous, prairie-chickens plenty, the small streams abounded with speckled trout, while larger fish were to be obtained from the Iowa River. With these, and what they were able to raise, it would seem these hardy pioneers fared sumptuously.

Along with the tide that rolled over the country in 1851 was a man noted for his wealth, energy and perseverance. He had heard of the new El Dorado ; in fact, he had investigated it, and became convinced that its resources were vast, and when developed would make one of the richest agricultural districts in the world. He foresaw all this, and came to stay, bringing with him a herd of cattle. Among others who preceded him was one Timothy Fuller, whose claim he purchased and settled on. This man is known all over the county as Frank Teabout, the founder of Frankville.

This same year he erected a small building for a store, and built his residence, which at that time was considered palatial—the finest structure throughout the whole county. This same building was destroyed by fire several years ago. These buildings were the nucleus about which was to form one of the liveliest towns known to the early days of Winneshiek County. The store building was not destined long to remain unoccupied. There was no store within miles where the settlers, who by this time had become quite numerous, could supply their demands for merchandise, with the exception of one at Moneek. It was plain to be seen that a store here would furnish a section of country in a radius of many miles, and the merchant who should first open his stock of goods was sure to prosper. The store building was hardly completed before a peddler came that way who had an eye to business, and made negotiations with Mr. Teabout, whereby he got the privilege of putting in a stock of goods. Peddling suddenly lost all its charms for Mr. Currier, for this was the name of the first merchant of Frankville.

He unloaded his peddler's wagon and commenced trading at once. Mr. Currier carried on the mercantile business at this place for two or three years, during which time he did a lucrative business. He finally sold out his business to Mr. Frink, and he to Mr. Teabout, who finding the capacity of the store becoming too small for the increasing business, erected a larger and better building, which bore the name of "Emigrant Store." This building contained a large hall, the most commodious, at that time, to be found anywhere in the country, and in it were given many dances, and held many important meetings. The name of the

store is suggestive of two things: First, it was a bid for the patronage of the hundreds of emigrants who passed by its door every day on their way to Southern Minnesota. Secondly, it was what its name implied, "The Emigrant Store." It was the last store of any consequence at which emigrants could supply themselves with the necessities required to see them through to their destination.

In 1852, Frankville was little more than a trading point, at which lived the only inhabitant and proprietor, Mr. Frank Teabout; but about this time an event transpired which gave to it life and brighter prospects for the future. A commission had been appointed to locate the State road for the benefit of immigrants seeking homes in Northwestern Iowa and Southern Minnesota. This commission held undisputed authority to locate the road, according to their judgment, to the best advantage. It was plain to be seen that wherever this road ran it would be a great advantage to that section of country, and especially would it act as a stimulus to the germ towns along its route, for over this route must travel the great caravans of immigration pouring into the country.

The Road Commission had their headquarters at McGregor, the designated point from which the road would start. For months this road had been talked of, and all kinds of speculations made as to the route it would take. The settlers lining the Military road felt sure that it would only serve as an auxilliary to their established highway, while those further to the northeast were determined that they would have the benefit of it. As a natural consequence, when the time arrived for a session of the commission to be held at "Poverty Point," better known to-day as Monona, a strong lobby, representing these various sections and their interests, were on hand and busily using all the artifices at their command to induce the commission to locate the road through that section of country that would most benefit them.

A strong lobby from the vicinity of Frankville was in attendance, and the result of their labor proves that their arguments were more potent with the commission than those of their opponents. They succeeded in securing the road. It is stated, on good authority, that the founder of Frankville carried "the arguments" that secured the location of the road, in a large demijohn. It is also in evidence that his opponents used the same kind of "arguments," but not being so wealthy, did not take along so large a demijohn as did the Frankville man. His opponents were crest-fallen and discouraged as soon as they caught a glimpse of Teabout's "argument." They knew its efficaciousness, and that such a bountiful supply as was exhibited could not help but



secure the coveted road. Mr. Teabout, self-conscious of success, let the commissioners smell the jug, then took a bee-line for Frankville. They of course followed, and declared their track to be the line of the road. The military fellows took up their homeward march, much chagrined.

The location of the road is the greatest event in the history of Frankville, for without it, in all likelihood, the place would never have been anything more than the residence of Mr. Frank Teabout. As it is, Frankville is a pleasant village, and at one time figured conspicuously in the history of the county.

Among the men who represented the embryo Frankville before the commission at "Poverty Point," and labored for its interests, was one who strenuously objected to the "Demijohn Arguments." He looked upon the merits of his case alone, and would sanction no device that even savored of anything improper. Let his name be placed on record: It was Benjamin Beard, a man of thrift, enterprise, and strong moral character. At that time he figured conspicuously in the history of the county, and was regarded as among its most eminent men. He settled on Washington Prairie in 1850 or 1851, and brought with him more wealth than, perhaps, any other man, with the exception of Frank Teabout. The history of his life is an incessant labor for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the community in which he resided. He was in the minority in his objection to "demijohn argument," and consequently what he said disregarding its use, had little effect. It was near night when the Commission arrived at Mr. Teabout's residence, and they of course accepted his hospitality until the next morning. On the next day Mr. Teabout lead the Commissioners to Decorah, they declaring their line of march to be the location of the new road. There were other parties besides Mr. Teabout who studied self-interest in the location of the State road. Among the number was John McKay, a respected farmer, and in 1851 the largest tax-payer in the county. He secured the passage of this desired highway through his farm. Mr. McKay had the same ambition for a town that actuated his neighbor, Mr. Teabout, and took measures looking to the accomplishment of such a purpose. His first work in that direction was the establishment of a postoffice, which was effected on the discontinuance of the Jamestown office. He also secured the location of a store at this place. This town bore the name of Trout River, and at one time was a strong competitor of Frankville. The postoffice was continued at this place for nearly two years, from whence it was moved to Frankville. It is claimed

that this move was effected through a compromise entered into between the respective founders of the two towns.

Immediately on the location of the road, as if by magic, a town grew up about the nucleus that had previously been built, and was given the name of Frankville. Frankville very soon became the great center of attraction. Moneek became discouraged, and moved the greater part of its worldly effects up to the new town. Among those who came from Moneek to Frankville was Lathrop and others. As predicted, the road was crowded with immigrants seeking homes in Northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota, and Frankville became a town of great importance. The mercantile interests were represented by Adams & Houg, Teabout and Peter Beard, who kept a complete stock of dry goods and a general assortment of everything in the mercantile line.

The Lathrop House, an impressive three-story frame building, was built by Phillip Lathrop in the year 1854. This hotel was well provided for, and did a good business. The building was destroyed by fire in the winter of 1857-8. Mr. Lathrop was absent at the time of the burning of his house, at Des Moines, lobbying through a bill asking the location of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Frankville, the people of that place pledging land and material in aid of its construction. It will hardly be necessary to say that they failed to secure the location. Mr. Teabout replaced the building destroyed, by another, which long afforded hospitality to the traveler. Mr. Lathrop served as landlord in the new building for some time afterward.

Much of the early success and prosperity of Frankville is justly accredited to its founder, Mr. Frank Teabout. He possessed wealth, and lavished it on the various enterprises that benefitted his town. To be concise, Mr. Teabout is an energetic, money-making man, generous and public-spirited, of strong likes and dislikes, and when once impressed favorably with an object does not hesitate to give it his support. Mr. Teabout looked upon his town with favor; in fact, was very solicitous of its welfare, and, as a natural consequence, at its beginning took an active part in whatever benefitted it. In 1852 he built the Presbyterian Church, and gave it to that denomination—the first house of worship built in the village. This church edifice was early occupied by Rev. D. W. Lyon, a preacher who divided his time between McGregor, Monona, Frankville and other points. While the Rev. D. W. Lyon was exercising his talents in teaching morality, other elements of the community were trafficking in liquor, and thereby exercising a

contra influence. The founder of the town kept a bar and did a lucrative business. One day, when the town was at its acme, a man entered his saloon and said: "Well, D—— *croaked* last night; did you hear of it?" "No," said Teabout, and continued: "You don't mean to say that he is dead?" "Yes," was the answer, "as dead as a mackerel—died of *delirium tremens*!" "Well," answered Teabout, "sorry, very sorry to hear that; he was a good customer. I have been selling him three gallons a week."

As an illustration of the importance Frankville attained when at its acme, it will only be necessary to state that the Free Masons of Decorah used to go to the former place to hold lodge meetings.

Frankville, like all lively towns in a new country, had its desperate characters, although less known than is frequently the case. Robberies and bold attempts at it were not infrequent. Mr. Phillip Lathrop was twice waylaid and once robbed. On one occasion Mr. Lathrop had returned from Chicago, where he had been to dispose of some stock, and had a large sum of money on his person. It was late when he reached home. Darkness, that boon companion of criminals, had shrouded the earth in gloom. Mr. Lathrop, after partaking of his supper, repaired to the barn to look after a blooded horse he owned. It seems that the movement had been anticipated by the desperado who laid in wait for him, and when the opportune time arrived, dealt Mr. Lathrop a fearful blow with a heavy club, which felled him senseless. The would-be assassin tore open his victim's shirt, and abstracted a package containing \$700, and immediately decamped. The robber evidently was in a great hurry, for had he stopped to make a careful examination, he might have found an additional package containing \$5,000. As it was, in his haste to escape detection he scattered \$100 of the amount he had secured along the track as he fled. This amount was saved to Mr. Lathrop.

There was a family living on Washington Prairie who were very suspicious characters, and were looked upon with much distrust by the settlers. It was firmly believed that their house was the rendezvous for all the desperadoes and law-breakers of the country. A woman of disreputable character, who had shared their confidence, and no doubt abetted and aided them in their criminal practices, became angry with them for some fancied or real slight, and divulged many very unsavory things. Among other things, she told that they were the murderers of a missing peddler. Although it was believed that the peddler met such a



tragic fate, yet nothing could be proven that would inculcate them in the crime.

Where law-breakers abound peace officers are necessary. A Mr. Bateman was the first Justice of the Peace in Frankville. He was a native of Wisconsin. For the enforcement of a due regard of law, the people of Frankville thought they could give him no better officer to assist in that duty than Moses Hostetter, and consequently he was chosen the first Constable.

In 1853, and thereabout, Frankville was the seat of learning—the Athens of Winneshiek County, as it were. At least, she could boast of more professional men. She had no less than three distinguished attorneys, men who did not think it beneath their dignity to accept an office from their fellow citizens. These men were J. T. Atkins, who served the people as Representative and Senator, and James McKay, the first Representative elected after the organization of the county. John D. McKay served the public as an attorney.

In 1854 Mr. Teabout built a saw-mill at a cost of \$1,500. This mill did a good business, its owner finding a ready sale for all the timber it could saw. The mill was sold to Mr. Cutler. No trace of it remains to-day. In 1856 Mr. Teabout built a large steam grist mill, of two run of stone, at a cost of \$10,000. Although the county possessed some very valuable mill sites, yet but few of them had been utilized. As a result, the steam grist mill, during the first few years of its existence, was a financial success; but as the country settled up, and the numerous water powers throughout the county became utilized, the steam mill began to cease paying very large dividends, and was finally sold by the proprietors to Messrs. Beard and Cutler, who transferred the machinery to their Spring Water Mill, on the Canoe. Parties used to come from Southern Minnesota to get their grist ground at this mill.

In 1867 Frankville experienced a revival. The chief mover in the good work was a Rev. Mr. Taylor. Many converts were made and much good effected through the christianizing influence wrought throughout the community by this missionary. Among the number converted was Mr. Teabout. He was trafficking in liquor at the time. He then had in stock about \$800 worth of liquors, which he rolled into the street and made into a public bonfire. Ever since this sacrifice Mr. Teabout has not sold a dollar's worth of liquor.

The Methodist Church was built in 1873. This denomination had held services previously in other buildings. To the Rev. Mr. Webb is

said to belong the honor of being the first minister of this denomination to officiate in the place.

Frankville continued to prosper until the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad cut it off; then came its decline. The town numbers about 300 inhabitants, has several stores, two churches, an excellent school, and possesses many wealthy and influential citizens—men noted throughout the county for their sterling qualities. Most of these are men who came to the county poor, or comparatively so, but through industry and perseverance have been enabled to accumulate a handsome competency.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### HESPER.

*Hesper Township in 1851—Two Explorers, and their Search for Homes—E. E. Meader—The First Cabins—Opening the First Farm—Official Survey of the Northern Boundary—The Last Civilized Dwelling West of the Mississippi—The First Arrival of Members of the Society of Friends—Russell Taber Builds a Saw Mill—The First Merchant—The Friends Erect the First House of Worship—The First Hotel—The First School House—A Town Organization Effected—Hesper's Railroad Schemes—The Indian Scare—The Educational Interests—The Library Association—The Lutheran and Methodist Churches—Hesper's Lodge of Good Templars—Conclusion.*

Previous to 1851, the territory now embraced in Hesper Township was wholly uninhabited and almost unexplored. In February, of that year, two immigrants, in search of a location, left their families at one of the settlements on the Volga, in Clayton County, and set out with the intention of pushing their explorations through Winneshiek and beyond, or until they found a region of country which would satisfy them as a future home.

When they passed through Decorah there were then in the place only three houses (log cabins) occupied by three families—Day, Painter and Morse. Proceeding eight or ten miles to the northwest, they met with a warm welcome, and found lodging at the house of a man named McIntyre, on the very outskirts of the Winneshiek settlements. In those days, when passing travelers were seldom seen, and neighbors few and far between, the loneliness of the pioneer families was often very oppressive, and the arrival of an entire stranger was greeted as warmly as the visit of an intimate friend under other circumstances. The desire for society seems inherent in the human heart, and any one coming to settle on the frontier was sure of a hearty welcome from those already located. There was, for the same reason, a feeling of distrust and antipathy toward land speculators, who would select the choicest tracts and hold them, unimproved, till the labors of actual settlers upon adjacent tracts had greatly enhanced their value. Kindly as our two explorers were received, their inquiries about land were coolly met, and not very satisfactorily answered, till their entertainers were convinced that they came with a view to actual settlement, and not as speculators. Then a man named Waterman, who was at McIntyre's, told of a scope of country lying to the northward, which he believed would just meet their wishes, and offered to go with them next day to view it, as he was intending to locate a claim in the same vicinity. The offer was gladly accepted. The next morning being very cold, yet with but little snow upon the ground, it was decided to leave the team at McIntyre's and proceed to make the intended explorations on foot. Several other men, including McIntyre and son, joined company with them, making eight in all. After several miles' tramping, they came into the neighborhood of the site where the village of Hesper now stands. An inspection of the surface, soil, timber, water-supply, and general "lay of the land," satisfied the immigrants that this was the place they were looking for, and that further exploration would be superfluous. At that time this portion of the county had not been surveyed (was not yet upon the market) and as the boundary line between Iowa and Minnesota had not been run, there was some doubt as to whether it lay in the State or the Territory. Our immigrants, therefore, decided to go to the land-office at Dubuque, learn, as far as possible, whether the chosen spot lay within the State of Iowa, and take steps for securing a claim to such lands as they had selected.

One of these men was E. E. Meader, the first permanent settler in Hesper Township, and still one of its honored citizens. He was born



in the State of Maine, in the year 1814, was married to Lydia A. Felker 1836, removed to Southern Indiana in 1837, where he followed the occupation of a carpenter and builder. Having decided to change his location and calling, he started with his family for Iowa in the autumn of 1850, to seek a home and devote himself to the cultivation of the soil, the wonderful fertility of which he had heard so highly praised. In one of the Clayton County settlements he found a temporary stopping place, when, falling in with a Mr. Frazier, from Wisconsin, who was, like him, seeking a new home, they came together in the manner just related, and made their first inspection of the lands upon which they afterward settled.

Visiting the land office after their prospecting tour, they were assured that the locality chosen would fall within the State of Iowa, and so they made immediate preparations to return and begin improvements. Accordingly, in March they came with their teams, encamped in the woods, and prepared building sites as follows: Meader on what afterward proved to be the southeast quarter of section 10, and almost on the very spot where his present residence stands; Frazier on the southwest quarter of the same section, the site now occupied by the dwelling of Thomas Truman. They next cut and hauled together logs for building a house on each site, and then were obliged to go eight miles to obtain hands to help put them up. Some weeks previous to this Waterman had come with his family, and encamped on a part of section 11, near where Russell Taber's steam mill now stands, and was engaged in making sugar from the sugar-maples in the surrounding woodland. On the occasion of raising the two houses Mrs. Waterman presided over the culinary department, and the simple meal, composed of such materials as were obtainable, and served in a style suited to the circumstances, was eaten with a hearty relish. The occasion was one of general good feeling and social hilarity, and was long remembered as the first gathering in Hesper Township of that kind which early settlers in any country know so well how to appreciate. When the company dispersed, there were to be seen standing, the walls of the two pioneer cabins of the neighborhood—the walls simply. The roof and floor were to be an afterwork. In the days following the proprietors cut timber and split out enough clapboards, or "shakes," to roof both buildings, piled them outside the walls, and then started back to the Volga settlements for their families. For some reason, now forgotten, Frazier did not return to his claim till the following autumn, so that the Meader family was obliged to come alone. Late in the evening of the 11th of April, 1851,

they reached Ackerson's, about four miles from their destination, where they were persuaded to pass the night. But early next morning, without stopping for breakfast, they pushed on to their new home, set out the cook stove beside the unfinished house, and there, in the open air of that chill April morning, Mrs. Meader prepared and set before her husband and five children, the first of many thousands of meals which she was destined to serve upon the same spot.

The walls of the house had not even a doorway, and the first proceeding after breakfast was to cut an entrance, and then to put on the roof, for which purpose a supply of nails had been brought in the wagon. By night the family had a shelter overhead, and a loose, temporary floor of split boards; but the walls being entirely without chinking, and only a blanket hung across the doorway, the first night, which was stormy, with wind, rain and snow, was cheerless enough.

By a dint of hard labor, patient endurance, and the advance of the season, they were, in the course of a few weeks, settled in comparative comfort.

The next most pressing matter was to get in a crop of corn before the season for planting was past. To Mr. Meader farming was a new occupation, and especially such farming as was adapted to the location and circumstances in which he found himself placed. He succeeded, however, in obtaining help to break ten acres of prairie, and proceeded to plant it in a manner familiar to all early settlers of the prairies, but strange enough to persons from the older states, and to very many of the present residents of Iowa. The tough prairie sod, thinly sliced and turned over by the breaking plow, afforded no loose soil for covering the corn if planted in the ordinary way; so the expedient was adopted of cutting a hole with an axe or crowbar, dropping in the seed, and pressing the cut together with the foot or by another blow with the implement used. This was the usual process of planting "sod corn," and often a fair crop was realized, with no further labor except gathering, the toughness of the sod precluding the possibility of any cultivation. In this way was planted the first ten acres of corn in the new settlement. But when it was all in, and had laid long enough to be up and growing, a new difficulty appeared, and one the possibility of which our newly-fledged farmer had not anticipated—the seed was bad, and had rotted in the ground. Nothing remained to be done but attempt to procure seed that would grow, and then re-plant the field. After much inquiry and trouble a sufficient quantity of an inferior variety of corn was found which seemed to have retained its vitality, and the re-

planting was accomplished by the 6th day of June. Although the season was quite unfavorable, a comparatively fair crop was gathered, amply sufficient for house supply, with a small surplus for sale. A small crop of buckwheat was also raised that first season.

The same summer a man named Larsen, a native of Norway, located a claim on the southwest quarter of section 9, and nearly the same time a Mr. Brown located on the southeast quarter of the same section. Frazier arriving with his family in the fall, so the extreme isolation of the first few months was in a great measure relieved.

The following spring marked an epoch of interest in the history of this locality, as well as in that of the State, for then it was that the official survey of the northern boundary was entered upon. For several days the Engineer Corps made the little settlement their headquarters while engaged with their duties in the vicinity, and added to its material prosperity, as well as enlivened it socially during their stay. Stopping again as they returned from the final completion of their labors, they reported that the house of one Nichols, erected that spring five miles west of Hesper, but on the Minnesota side, was the last civilized dwelling they fell in with on their route from the Mississippi River to the Big Sioux.

In the summer of 1853 there was quite an influx of settlers, among whom might be mentioned Tristram Allen, a member and minister of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, who, with his family, came from Michigan in August of that year, and bought out Frazier's claim, upon which he settled and lived for almost twenty years, or until a short time before his death, which occurred in 1873.

Two months later several other families of Friends came from some part of Michigan and settled, some of them within the limits of this township, and some just over the line in Minnesota. Thus was begun the nucleus of the Quaker Settlement at Hesper, which has ever since been one of the prominent features of the place. Among those who came at this time was Geo. N. Holway, a native of Massachusetts, but for a time before his coming to Iowa a resident of Michigan. He purchased and settled upon the claim located by Larsen, on section 9, where he lived for a number of years, and then removed to Decorah, where he still resides. Also Joseph Gibbon, D. Allan, Ansel Rogers, and Abraham West.

In the spring of 1855 was held the first regularly organized meeting of the Society of Friends in the new settlement, and in the course of the summer a number of families of that persuasion came in from Ver-



mont, adding materially to the Quaker element and to the prosperity of the settlement. Among these were Russell Taber and his brothers, who, having purchased the claim originally located by Waterman, began to make preparations for erecting a steam mill. This they got in running order, so as to do sawing, before winter set in. This mill, with its subsequent additions and enlargements, still stands on the north side of the village of Hesper.

During the winter a small building was put up, a stock of goods procured, and the first mercantile establishment in the place was opened, by H. H. Whaley, on the corner now occupied by Meader's store.

With opening spring came another influx of immigrants, among them, several families of Friends, from Indiana, and in the course of the summer of 1856, the members of that society erected a meeting house, on the southwest corner of section 10, from which place it was, a year later, removed to a lot within the bounds of the town, then being first laid out.

On the third day of July, 1856, T. N. Wilson arrived with his family from Jackson County, where he had stopped for two years after coming to the State, from the East. Immediately after his arrival he began preparations for erecting a house, which, with subsequent additions and enlargements, is the hotel he now occupies. On the last day of July, the building was so far completed that the family moved into it, and on the third day of August it was first opened for the entertainment of travelers, since which time it has been the principal stopping place for strangers in the town of Hesper.

The following year still more marked advances were made in the way of enterprise and improvement. In April, the first Methodist Quarterly Meeting was held in Wilson's house, and the Rev. Mr. Lease, then quite a young man, was placed upon the charge as minister. In the summer a school house was put up on a lot where the building now stands, but no longer used for its original purpose; it is now known as the "Grange Hall." The first term of school in this house was taught by Edward W. Holway, and at this time a resident of Cresco, in Howard County.

The same summer a blacksmith shop was erected by H. A. Maydale, and several other buildings going up, with quite a demand for building lots, it was decided to lay out a town under the name of Hesper, a conclusion which, it seems, was not fully entertained previous to this time. Accordingly a survey was made, a plat drawn on the 27th of December, 1857, and recorded on the 25th of February, 1858. From that time forward the place had a definite name and prospect. The township was

organized the same year, it having previously been included with Burr Oak, and shortly after,—the exact date of which the writer has been unable to ascertain, the Hesper Postoffice was established. with H. H. Whaley as first Postmaster.

Year by year the little town slowly improved and increased in size and importance; not with the mushroom growth of temporary points of speculation, nor with the great strides of a central trading mart, but with the steady, healthy prosperity of a quiet rural village, which is all it claims to be.

It is true that an occasional railroad scheme has raised anticipations almost to fever heat, and for a time accelerated the common pulse-rate, but these are only what every community are liable to be attacked with at intervals, making a casual disturbance of equilibrium, but in no way interfering with the general steady course of events.

Though peopled so largely with the peace-loving Quakers, this township furnished a full quota of soldiers during the war of the rebellion, and at the time of the Indian outbreak in Minnesota, the settlement was thrown into a state of great anxiety and fear on account of its exposed and comparatively defenseless situation. Couriers were dispatched in every direction, men and arms collected, and preparations made for as stubborn a defense as possible, in case the worst should come. But the mounted scouts sent out to scour the country to the northwest, after a ride of many miles, and an absence of several days, came back reporting no signs of Indians in all the country through which they had passed. In the course of a few weeks the excitement died away without any sanguinary result, but it is still fresh in the memory of those who passed through it, as a season of general trepidation, panic and distress.

The educational interests of the place early began to assume a degree of no small importance. Scholars from other parts of the county and adjoining portions of Minnesota, flocked to the public school of Hesper, and their progress in learning gave it a deservedly high reputation. In the course of time the old schoolhouse was found to be too small to accommodate the pupils. and the present elegant and well arranged building was erected, in 1872.

In March, 1868, a library association was formed, under the name of "The Philomatheans," and a small, but well-assorted circulating library was collected, which has done much toward cultivating the literary taste of those who have taken advantage of the privileges offered to the members of the association. The number of volumes now in the library is two hundred,

Hesper has likewise, always shown an unusual interest in the cause of morality and religion. The membership of the society of Friends at this place being yearly increased by immigration from the New England States, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, it became necessary to build a larger place of worship, which was accordingly done in the summer of 1870. About the same time, or perhaps a year earlier, there being a heavy Norwegian population in the surrounding country, and these being mostly of the "Established Church" of their own country, they erected a Lutheran church just on the outskirts of the village southward. It is a neat frame building, with a bell-tower, which contains a good, clear-toned bell. On occasions of the regular church service, the audience room is always crowded with an eager and attentive congregation.

In 1873 there was a Methodist Church built, in a pleasant location in the western part of town. This elegant structure, surmounted by a graceful spire, adds much to the attractive appearance of the village, besides affording a comfortable and pleasant place for the religious services of the society.

In the cause of temperance Hesper has always maintained a high rank. No drinking saloon has ever been able to secure a foothold in the place, and the only attempt ever made to establish one was nipped in the bud by the friends of temperance, who were thoroughly aroused by the threatened invasion of their community by a foe so destructive of morality and good order. In the year 1861, a lodge of Good Templars was organized and kept in active working order for some time, but it was, at length, suffered to go down. In February, 1876, a reorganization was effected, and now the Hesper Lodge is one of the largest and most active in the state, with an enrollment of 125 members in good standing.

Having no railroads or other means of public transportation, Hesper has never figured very largely as a point for trade. The interest in this direction being at present limited to two dry goods and general variety stores, and one drug store. In manufactures and mechanic arts it ranks rather higher, there being a steam saw mill and general wood-work establishment, with a small foundry and machine shop in connection with it; three wagon and sleigh shops, three blacksmith shops, three boot and shoe shops, one for harness making, one tailor shop, one millinery establishment, and a photograph gallery.

To the visitor the village presents a remarkably attractive appearance, on account of the almost universal air of neatness and comfort exhibited



by the dwelling houses and and their surroundings, as well as on account of the elevated location, from which a charming view is obtained over much of the surrounding country, and especially to the northward.

And, finally, the people of Hesper, though regretting the inconvenience of their isolation from railroads, seem generally satisfied that their township is second to none in the county, in the possession of those elements which go to make a community healthy, self-supporting, law-abiding, comfortable, intelligent and happy.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### OSSIAN.

*The Value of Thoroughfares—Ossian Thirty Years Ago—Its Founders—An Account of its Earliest Settlers—A Western Tavern--The Original Town Site—The Second Addition—Ossian the Rendezvous of Counterfeiters—The Establishment of a Postoffice—Its First Postmaster—The First Merchant—The First School House and First Teacher—The Assessments of Early Days—First Death—First Doctor—Newspaper History—Hoisting the Stars and Stripes—A New Era in the History of the Place—The Churches—Ossian's Importance and Prospective Future.*

In the infancy of Winneshiek County, as with all new countries, the location and opening of each thoroughfare for travel was hailed with as much joy as was the prospects of a railroad in latter times. The permanent location of a thoroughfare insured the prosperity of those living in its immediate vicinity, for over these roads must come the sea of immigration flooding the land. Over them must be transported the products of the country and the necessities of life needed by the settlers—no luxuries were in demand—and as a natural effect following the cause, along the margin of these thoroughfares, at convenient distances, small towns, or the germ of such, sprang into existence, serving as a center at which the commercial interests of the country could be transacted. No wonder then that the location of roads were much striven

for, and especially those of that character known as State roads. State roads were located by the State, and were considered permanent, while county roads would be re-located or discontinued. The location of a State road ever furnished an object of contention, and was regarded covetously by all the settlers that it would be likely to affect in the remotest degree; consequently the reason of the strife between the settlers on Washington Prairie and those along the Military Road, in trying to secure to themselves the location of the State road, spoken of to some extent in the history of Frankville.

Although the settlers along the Military Road failed in securing the (their) cherished object—the location of the State road past their doors—yet they possessed one thing to furnish them consolation—they had the Military Road, over which, at this time, the principal travel was done.

In 1850 there came to the county a man who was impressed with the beauty and fertility of a certain section located on the margin of the old Military Road. It was on an undulating prairie, in which Nature had seemed to vie with herself in spreading upon it her store of wealth with a lavish hand. The land was dressed in the tints of summer, and the occasional leafy groves breaking the monotony of the aspect lent enchantment to the scene. The land smiled with radiance, decked as it was in the adornments of nature. As the man contemplated this panorama his heart filled with admiration, which could find expression only in rapture over the scene spread out before him. Here at last was the place that he had long sought and had found not. Like Archimedes, he felt like exclaiming aloud, *Eureka!* Here, on the margin of the old Military Road, he would settle and make for himself a home. The question whether to pitch his tent here or not was not debatable. To behold the location was to decide in its favor.

This man, like others who settled near the main thoroughfares in a new country, had his dreams of the future, and saw stored away in his castles built on air the reward which he surely hoped to reap at a distant day. Feeding on his bright hopes of the future, here on this wild, beautiful and isolated spot he willingly became an exile for the time being. He believed his location suitable for a large town, and fondly hoped, as settlers came in and the country matured, that others would be of like opinion, and gather about him, actuated with the same desire—the building of a town which he hoped would eventually become the capital of the county. At this time, for a distance of five miles around

him, there was not to be seen, curling skyward, the neighborly smoke of a single settler.

John Ossian Porter, at the time of his settlement here, was in the prime of life. He was born in Henderson, Jefferson County, N. J., in the year 1822, and at the age of 20 was married to Miss Emily Wilkin-son. His wife was 17 years of age at the time of their marriage. At 25 years of age Mr. Porter moved with his family to Mercer County, Pa., where he followed farming for a living, and two years later he moved to Crawford County, the same State, where he kept hotel. He followed this business but one year, when, in company with his wife and four children, he immigrated to Winneshiek County, Iowa, settling on the northeast quarter of section 10, township 96, north of range 8, west of the principal meridian. In the early history of the place Mr. Porter took a very conspicuous part. He was frequently engaged in litigation, and it is said by those who knew him best in other days that he resembled the heathen Chinese.

“For ways that are dark,  
And tricks that are vain,  
The heathen Chinese is peculiar.”

This is affirmed on good authority, and the writer doubts not, with good reason, Mr. Porter was undoubtedly engaged in many “crooked” transactions, although nothing of a criminal nature has ever been proven against him in a court of justice.

The next settlers in the immediate vicinity, which was afterward destined to be Ossian, were the Brookses, who came a year and a half later. Chauncey Brooks had married Janett Newcombe. The natural result of this matrimonial alliance was an offspring born to them in the spring of 1852, which was the first white child born in Ossian. She was christened Mary. Capt. Caleb Brooks and Chauncey built a small, unpretentious log cabin, and lived the first years together. One of them afterwards built a stone building, which was used for years as a hotel.

J. O. Porter was the first to build. He erected a frame building, 18x20 in size, near the site of the old Quarter House, used years before by persons on their way from Fort Crawford to Fort Atkinson, and so named as it was considered a quarter of the distance between these places. This house became noted as a tavern, although the proprietor never “hung out his shingle,” and is justly credited with being the first hotel in the place, and J. O. Porter the first landlord. During the year the land-office was located at Decorah, John Ossian Porter’s house was a celebrated station for the stages running from McGregor west.



The next settlers following in the wake of the Brookses were Adolph Howard, John R. Howard, and Charles Wood. They came from Erie County, Pa. Nicholas Limebeck and family came next, and for a time at least rented land of Mr. Porter before making a permanent settlement. About this time James Brooks, the Nicholsons, Barney Boyle and McManus, took up their abode in this section.

The original town site of Ossian was laid out by its founder, John Ossian Porter, on the southeast corner of the section. It consisted of three blocks, in all fourteen lots. It was acknowledged by J. O. Porter and wife on the 13th of April, 1855, and was filed for record in the Recorder's office of Winneshiek County on the 30th of April, the same year. Mr. Elijah Middlebrook did the surveying. Two years later, on the 8th of April, Capt. C. E. Brooks acknowledged the plat of the first addition to Ossian, which was according placed on the proper record. It consists of six blocks, containing sixty-three lots.

On the 8th day of October, 1864, Capt. C. E. Brooks acknowledged the plat of his second addition to Ossian, which consisted of thirty blocks, divided into lots. This plat was properly recorded. On the 4th day of May, 1869, he laid out ten additional blocks, and called it Brooks' Western Addition to Ossian. This, so far as the records show, was the last addition to the place, and, minus the vacation of a few blocks by Mr. Brooks, is the Ossian of to-day.

In the early days of Ossian it was charged that a band of counterfeiters made it their rendezvous. Although counterfeit gold pieces were in circulation, and the "queer" "shoved" by suspicious persons, and other evidence existed that the nefarious business was being plied in this vicinity, yet no action was ever taken for the punishment of the supposed guilty parties.

Ossian assumed its name at the time of the establishment of the post-office at that place. Mr. Goddard was very anxious that a postoffice should be established here, and this result was finally brought about through his influence and labor. He circulated a petition asking the location of a postoffice at this point, which was unanimously signed. The petition was finally granted. Mr. J. Ossian Porter was made the first postmaster, and the new office was ever after known by his name.

Several years after the first town plat was made, Mr. Porter erected a shanty, and gave the use of the same to Erick Anderson, in which to conduct a mercantile business. Mr. Anderson purchased a stock of goods of Lathrop, who was located at Moneek, and had by this time begun to sensibly feel that the town was dead, and was glad of an

opportunity of selling. This stock was transferred to Ossian, and thus did Ossian acquire her first store and first merchant. At this time the country was poor, and everybody seemed to want credit. Mr. Anderson very generously trusted, and, as a result, his mercantile pursuit was a failure.

The first school was taught in a room over Erick Anderson's store, and a young man by the name of John Case taught it. This school was a select one, and was paid for out of the pockets of its patrons. Unfortunately for the growing up youths of the place, Ossian had no public school building for years after that period when she needed such an institution. The residents were divided as to the best location for such a building, and forever quarreling about it. As a result, no building was built, and the young children were the sufferers thereby.

The first school-house built in the village is now occupied as a saloon. About the year 1870 a large commodious brick school-house was built, which at present furnishes ample accommodations for the scholars that attend the public school. In the year 1871, or thereabout, a German school building was erected.

Almost from its earliest inception—from the time that its proprietor kept his jug well filled, down to the present time,—Ossian has been celebrated for its traffic in intoxicating drinks, and street brawls were not an infrequent occurrence in its early history. The place used to be quite a rendezvous, as it were, for the sporting men. Here they would bring their scrub horses and have their scrub races, which often grew exciting and furnished much amusement. There were other amusements beside horse racing, to lighten the gloom, if such ever fell athwart the path of these settlers. Dancing was another favorite amusement, and considering the disadvantages under which it was pursued, must have been much relished and very exhilarating. Every week, about, a dance was announced to come off at the house of J. O. Porter, and here, at the appointed time, the boys with their girls would gather from every point of the compass. Jimmy Buller was the only musician, and the only tune he could play was, "Pop Goes the Weasel." This he would play and they would dance all night, making the old building fairly shake with their tread.

The first death to occur in the vicinity of Ossian, as near as can be ascertained, was that of Thomas Larsen. He was killed by an ox team running away with him.

In 1856, a Dr. Haskell became a resident of the place. He was a quack, and dealt in quack medicines. Dr. Blakeman was really Ossian's

first physician. He did not remain long. Dr. N. A. Drake was the first physician that permanently located at Ossian and made a success of his profession.

Porter & Brooks were the first attorneys, or rather pettifoggers that the place had.

To the Rosa boys belongs the credit of running the first threshing machine west of Monona. They were ever busy, and did a lucrative business.

T. B. Wood gave Ossian its first newspaper enterprise. It lived but a short time. A second *Enterprise* was started in 1876, which likewise had a brief, but brilliant existence. In 1877, the *Ossian Independent* was started, by E. L. Howe. It remains for time to say whether this last venture shall succeed or not.

About the year 1861, when the whole country was in a fury of excitement over the secession of the Southern States, an event occurred which is worthy of record in the history of Ossian. Her chief proprietors, Porter and Brooks, and a blacksmith named Henry, were Democrats, and talked favorable to the south, in a joking way. It was the wrong time to joke on so serious a subject. The loyal men of the surrounding country, and from the vicinity of Castalia, organized and paid Ossian a visit with the avowed purpose of humiliating her proprietors. They raised a liberty-pole, and floated from its top the Stars and Stripes.

The year 1865 marked a new era in the history of Ossian. That which was the death blow of Frankville—the railroad—gave fresh life to Ossian. During this year the railroad was built past its door. The year before, C. E. Brooks made a fresh addition to the place, which was far-sighted, for town lots became in demand immediately. The following year the construction of numerous dwellings was commenced, and business interests of various kinds multiplied.

Broughton was the first druggist.

Ossian was nearly twenty-one years of age before a single church edifice had been erected. The Catholics erected a building for worship, which was the first, about the year 1869. About two years later the Methodists built a church.

To-day Ossian is the second place of importance in the county. As the shipments by railroad is an indication of what the place is, the figures are here given: In 1874, Ossian shipped 266,505 bushels of wheat, 1,871 bushels of oats, 8,820 bushels of barley, 1,693 live hogs, and 428,000 dressed hogs. This statement shows a business done, second only to that of Decorah. At the present writing, Ossian has a



population of about 700 souls. The city was incorporated March, 1876, and as a result of the first city election, the following city officers were elected :

*Mayor*—Geo. McWilliams.

*Aldermen*—James Kenedy, H. C. Borgess, Carl Eiler, S. D. Hinckley and J. J. Smith.

*Clerk*—James Maloy.

Around Ossian is a broad, open prairie, of the richest description, which is nearly all under cultivation, and presents to the eye a black surface, indicative of a soil of the most productive nature. It is a shipping point for a large section of country, the shipments from this station comparing favorably with any other along the road.

Ossian has not yet reached its acme. It will continue to progress for years to come, and in the future, promises to be one of our most flourishing inland cities.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CALMAR.

*Founding of Marysville, afterwards known as Calmar—Peter Clawson and Alf. Clark its Founders—Strife between Calmar and Conover for the Supremacy—The Iowa and Dakota Branch Railroad—Incorporation of the Village—Newspaper History—Societies—Churches—Hotels—Saloons—The Natural Situation of the Place—Its Resources—Its Prospects for the Future—Population.*

“In the early part of the year 1854, the first building was erected in Calmar by Peter Clawson and Alf. Clark, natives of Sweden, who came from California about that time, and located at this place. This building was little more than a shanty, but served the double purpose of variety store and dwelling house, Clark & Clawson being the occupants and the first merchants of the town.

“John P. Landin, my informant, tells me that the town site, surveyed a little later in the season—himself helping to carry the chain—and was then platted and dedicated to the public, by Clark, the owner of the land. On the completion of the survey it was found that the “store” stood in the center of Main Street. Before winter, however, Clarke & Co. had erected three other buildings of more pretensions,—a hotel, the Calmar House, which burned down in August, 1873, a store, on the site now occupied by P. Olson’s building, and a saloon, which stood on the ground now occupied by the Huston House.

Clark and Co. ran the new store, one Henry Miller the hotel, and Hans Gulbranson the saloon, while Landin served for some time in the capacity of hostler in the hotel stable. On account of the scarcity of shingles in the river markets at the time, the hotel was roofed in the first instance with canvas, or sheeting, and so remained for several months. Landin dug the first well in town, during the same year. It was sunk in the public square, and when down about fourteen feet, but before coming to water, it was left uncovered. One night Clawson, in a journey from the saloon to his store, walked into it. As there was no water in town

at the time, it is fair to presume that the ardent he got at the saloon was clear, and it made him so "loose" and limber that he was not in the least harmed by the fall. "On the 9th of July, 1854," says Landin, "before I ever saw Calmar, or the site where it stands, I stopped at Fort Atkinson, ate supper, stopped over night and breakfasted next day with Squire Cooney. After hoeing corn a while as an equivalent, I inquired of the Squire if there was any of my countrymen in the vicinity, and he told me that there was one by the name of Clark keeping store at Whisky Grove, and I came up here. It was my first day in Calmar. Whisky Grove, it appears, was a name often applied to this locality in those days.

"The town was by Clark named "Marysville," and went by that name for about one year, when a postoffice was located here, and, on account of there being another Marysville in the state, the name was changed to "Calmar." This latter name was also of Clark's choosing, and was given in remembrance of his native town of "Kalmar," situated on Kalmar Sound, on the southeast coast of Sweeden. Clark was the first Postmaster, and his successors have been P. M. Stanberg, D. S. Lovejoy, and John Scott, the present incumbent.

"In the year 1855, Landin erected a wooden building on the site now occupied by the Clawson & Landin Block. In that building he opened up a grocery business, and sold whisky and beer—the latter he brewed himself in an underground cave near by. A large percentage of his sales were paid in butter and eggs. At that time he paid from six cents to nine cents per pound for butter, and three cents per dozen for eggs. Whisky sold at five cents a glass, so that for only one dozen and eight eggs a man could get a "square drink," and if a customer wanted a "nog" it was common for the trader to throw in the egg "free gratis."

"During the next year (1856) the original portion of the Huston House was built by Clark, and is the oldest structure now standing in town. After this there were the usual changes and improvements common to small country towns, for a number of years. The place was slowly thriving, but nothing of importance occurred until the fall of 1864, at which time the track of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway was laid into and past Calmar. No depot was built here, and no side track put down, and the people were quite despondent at the prospect of being totally ignored by the railroad company, and having their village passed by with no more notice than if it had been a straw stack. Con- over, three miles further west, was the terminus of the road for the season, and there the company built a depot and put in side tracks.



Conover was seemingly the fortune favored locality. During the following winter and spring it was a point where material for construction was gathered, and a general rendezvous for the railroad operatives; and for some time it bid fair to become the "boss town" of the county. Like a Pacific Coast mining camp, it was of mushroom growth. In the course of six months from the starting it had attained a population of about twelve hundred, and boasted several hundred buildings, including stores, hotels, butcher shops, and some fourteen saloons—the latter doing a "land office" business. Town lots were held at a fabulous price, and the lucky farmer whose land adjoined the new metropolis considered his fortune secured. The Conover man, with an air of patronizing sympathy, advised his Calmar friend to "move up," and not waste his existence in so dull a place as Calmar, assuring him that in no event could it again become of any importance except as a suburb of Conover. Some of our townsmen credulously acted on this advice, with the subsequent experience of the prodigal son. A few months after this the railroad commenced building a depot and putting down side tracks in Calmar. All the business men were as tickled as a boy who has narrowly escaped a threshing. Some of them exhibited their good feeling by helping the workmen to carry and place rails on the track, and making themselves generally useful, until it seemed to occur to them that the track at that stage would be put down without their help, and that their enthusiasm was manifesting itself in a somewhat ludicrous manner. After this quite a rivalry sprung up between the two villages, and it seemed uncertain for a couple of years which would come off victor. But as the railroad was completed further on, Conover's inhabitants were in part withdrawn. Her trade gradually diminished and her prosperity disappeared. People moved away and took their buildings with them. the renegade Calmarite took his store or his dwelling, piece-meal, or mounted it on skids, and then attaching a long string of oxen, slowly and mournfully moved back into the bosom of his first love, a sadder, but doubtless a wiser man. This was done by deserters to surrounding towns, until the village up the way had to a great extent disappeared, which disappearance was helped along by a disastrous fire occurring about the same time. Of late years there are some unfeeling persons who, all unmindful of the former glory of the little village, persist in calling it "Gone-over;" but it is not altogether gone, and there are still some good men staying there. In fact it seems to be a remarkable place for *staying*, as all who have passed by rail between this point and Decorah can testify. The jolly conductor, who, in the winter of 1873, gained a

reputation as a "snow-bucker," seems to have a decided tendency to *stay* in Conover; so much so that his passengers often wonder if he has concluded to *settle* there. Though quite able to buck his train through a formidable snow drift, in any ordinary locality, in Conover he would seem to be unable to propel himself through a bank of moonshine.

But the little town is still a good place to rest. It has about it that "Hold-on-boys-don't-fiet-it-won't-take-you-long-to-rest-an-hour" sort of an air, that is perfectly irresistible. It is fair to presume that if the "Seven Sleepers" had not awakened till recently, and should have first opened their eyes in that village, instead of making many strange inquiries, and exhibiting surprise at the changed appearance of the modern Ephesus, or the altered look, or behavior of the inhabitants, they would have merely looked around a moment, stretched their limbs, yawned, and then turned over and commenced another nap. The Trojan spirits who still cling to the fortunes of that village are certainly deserving of the highest praise. Like the stern Roman soldier who stood guard at the gate of Pompeii, and still refused to leave his post, though the sky "rained fire and ashes," and the molten, bubbling flood advanced, threatening sure destruction, they deserve to be embalmed in history. But when they shall have tired of the unequal struggle against destiny, Calmar stands with open arms to receive them as the honored representatives of her former rival.

"In the year 1868, work was commenced on the Iowa & Dakotah branch of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, with Calmar as its eastern terminus and junction with the main line. During the year, track was laid as far as New Hampton, considerably increasing the trade of the town, and adding to its importance as a shipping center as the road was pushed further into the interior. During the next year the Decorah branch was built, but for a year thereafter the trains of that branch did not run farther east than Conover, since which time Calmar has been the eastern end of their run and the point of passenger transfer. But, as already stated, these trains still make a *stay* at Conover.

"In the year 1869, under the provisions of the Municipal Incorporation Act, Chapter 51, Revised Statutes of 1860, Calmar was made an incorporated town, and was duly organized by the election of municipal officers in March, 1870. John Scott was elected Mayor, and was re-elected in 1871. In 1872 John W. Tower was elected Mayor, and in 1873-4 the citizens chose S. V. Potter to fill that office. In 1875 the mantle was worn by A. E. Manchester, and E. Pennington is the present incumbent. Since the incorporation of the town, several miles of side-

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walks and cross-walks have been built, Town Hall erected, and many other public improvements made.

"In the year 1870, Calmar first boasted a newspaper. It was called the *Winneshiek Representative*, and was published and edited by T. B. Wood. It was continued here for about a year, and was then removed to Ossian, where it died a natural death shortly afterwards. The next venture in the newspaper business was undertaken by S. S. Haislett. He issued the first number of the *Calmar Guardian* on the 19th of April, 1876, and has ever since continued its publication.

The Free-Masons have a Lodge in Calmar with a membership of forty-five. Their hall is over the postoffice, and is neat, commodious and well furnished. The Lodge is out of debt, and its growth and influence in our town has been rapid and beneficent.

"The Sons and Daughters of Temperance also have a Lodge here; and although organized only about a year ago, it has about forty active members, and is doing a good work. Their hall, on the upper floor of the Anderson-Landin Block, is large and well arranged. In them is also embodied the 'Calmar Dramatic Club,' which for the last four years has been one of the recognized institutions of the place. Their hall is furnished with a stage, scenery and all the requisites for successful dramatic representation.

"Calmar is not a 'City of Churches,' but the near future is full of promise in that direction. The Norwegian Lutheran Society have a substantial stone edifice, occupying a commanding eminence in the eastern limits of the town, which was built in 1857, but has since been enlarged and refurnished. The Methodists hold public worship in the school building at present, but have hopes of being able to build before long, while the Roman Catholics have purchased grounds near the center of town, and will shortly commence the erection of a fine church edifice thereon.

"The Calmar Graded School, with Prof. J. A. Klein as principal, and Miss Isbell, assistant, is being conducted in a very creditable manner, and exhibits on its rolls for the present term the names of 125 pupils. The school building is large, well ventilated, and a model of convenience.

"The hotels are the Calmar Hotel, the Huston House and the American House, all well kept and doing a good business. Our town is still in need of further hotel accommodations. Any person with sufficient capital to erect a first-class hotel building here, and to furnish it in good shape, having at the same time the 'talent to run an hotel,' will find a good opportunity for a paying investment.



"The manufacturing establishment of Miller, Giesing & Co. is one of the live institutions of the place. Besides turning out numerous bobsleighs, carriages, etc., this company turned out last season 125 wagons. The 'Calmar Wagon' is fast gaining a wide reputation.

"For the size of the place, Calmar has fewer saloons than any other town in the county, though there are five here in active operation, each paying a license of \$100 a year to the corporation for the privilege of selling ale, wine and beer.

"John Hammer and —. Umheifer run the Calmar meat markets, and R. Dixon and C. J. Lindgren are the knights of the strop and razor. Prominent among our contractors and builders are L. O. Moon and J. A. Beebe.

"Calmar is situated on an elevated ridge, directly on the line of the old Military Road, which formerly led from McGregor to Fort Atkinson, and is about five miles southeast of the latter place. The surrounding country is a high rolling prairie, with beautiful groves of young timber here and there, some of which have been planted, and others that have grown up since the ingress of the first settlers. No finer prospect can be found in Northern Iowa than is afforded from the Landin Block, in Calmar. Especially is this true in autumn, when a peculiarly heavy haze often lingers in the great troughs between the prairie swells like the arms of a stretching sea, while the summits of the swells, with their russet-tinted groves, and farm houses, stretch away, one beyond another, like island ridges, the whole forming a beautiful and fairy-like archipelago. To the west and south, here and there a glimpse may be caught of the timber fringe marking the course of the Turkey, while northward may be seen patches of the bluff highlands which lie contiguous to the Upper Iowa. Taken altogether, a more pleasingly-diversified landscape would be hard to find. A more healthful locality than Calmar can not be found within the State. Being high and dry, it is exceedingly free from malaria, and when other and lower localities are stifling in a dead air, under a sweltering sun, Calmar almost invariably has a cool, refreshing breeze. Excellent water is found at a depth of from 16 to 30 feet.

"Besides being a railroad center, and the home of scores of railroad employes (thus making the railroad directly tributary to the trade and prosperity of our town) it is in the very heart and center of the famous Winneshiek wheat-fields, and as Winneshiek is the banner wheat county of the State, so is Calmar the banner township. There are many cattle and hogs raised for market by the surrounding farmers, and may be con-

sidered among the staples. Good building-stone is found in unlimited quantity only a short distance from town.

“The population of Calmar is from 700 to 900, consisting of native-born, or Americans, and Norwegians in about equal third parts, the remaining third being composed of Germans, Irish, Swedes and Bohemians, altogether forming quite a diversified, energetic and very industrious community. With a most delightful and healthy location, with a population containing no drones, with her excellent railroad facilities—about to be further extended by the continuation of the Iowa & Dakota division of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, still further west—with her central position in the great wheat fields, and the growing importance of her trade and manufactures, Calmar has every reason to anticipate a future of unusual growth and prosperity, and it scarcely needs a prophet to foretell that her anticipations will be realized.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## RIDGEWAY.

*Early Settlers of Lincoln Township—Water Courses—Danger of Pioneer Prairie Life—The Pioneer House and its Accommodations—Ridgeway's Birth and Christening—A Flower Blooms that Bears Seed—The Railroad Company becomes Magnanimous and Builds a Coop for the Accommodation of Travelers—Death of an Invalid—The Demon who Presides over the Ruling Evil, and his Victims—The First Nasby, and Others who followed him—Ridgeway becomes an Independent School District—Fury of the Fire King—Ridgeway Falls its Victim and is nearly Obliterated—Death of Daniel Rice—Recapitulation of the Losses Sustained by the Fire—Conclusion.*

The first settlement was made in Lincoln township in the spring of 1852. Knud Alfson built a small house and broke up a few acres on Section 27, while Lars Thomson commenced about the same time on Section 34. In the fall of the same year, Jacob Knudson and Kittle Sanderson established themselves on Section 22. The next year Gun-der Kittleson, Albert Kittleson, Gullick Thompson, Tove Thompson and Thomas Thompson, settled in the immediate neighborhood, while John Seleir, Michael Farrel, Charles Straun, John Wholehan, Nels Olsen, Charles Junck, H. W. Klemme, Andrew Michael, Phillip Kratz and Wm. Blackburn, came in during the two or three years following.

The township of Lincoln was formerly reckoned as an integral part of Decorah, an arrangement that did not last very long, however, as I am informed a reconstruction of the map was soon effected, by which the present township was apportioned to Sumner, and upon the authorized survey and platting of townships, was given its present name.

The first birth in Lincoln was a daughter of K. Alfson, an intelligent young lady, still unmarried, I believe.

The Turkey River runs through the western portion of the township,



affording considerable power, some of which is improved. Daubersmith's mill, about two and one-half miles from Ridgeway, is on the stream, and doing a fair milling business. There are several small water courses arising from springs in other portions of the township, which wend their way through sloughs and sharper depressions towards both the Turkey and Iowa.

Those who have settled upon the prairies of the west since the genius of enterprise commenced the building of railroads over their trackless wilds, can form but a faint conception of the hardships, trials and dangers to which the pioneers were exposed. For years the only markets for the products of their farm were trading posts, some times a hundred miles away; and in the fall of 1863, most of their wheat was hauled by horses and oxen to McGregor, over a hundred miles, and by "ways that were dark" at that. The farmers of Lincoln were not exempt from the general inconvenience and hardships of pioneer life, and many thrilling stories have I heard them tell of snow blockades wherein the proceeds of the sale of a load of wheat would all go to pay hotel bills, while their families at home were anxiously looking for their return.

In 1866, Ridgeway existed only in name. About this time the railroad company built a house for their accommodation, and Mr. S. Pike soon afterwards took charge of it. The building was 16x32 feet base, one and a half stories high, divided into several compartments, and ceiled throughout with good matched flooring. Mr. Pike with his wife moved into the house December 4, 1866, a day ever to be remembered in their experiences of housekeeping. Though the ground had been frozen for some time previous, the heavy rains that had fallen the preceeding week had thawed the earth again, and the different gangs who were grading the prospective grounds, and also a gang of track-layers who were putting in a switch and laying a spur of track for present accommodation, had made the house a place of resort for shelter during the heaviest of the rains, and when they reached there about dark of that rainy December night, the prospect was dreary enough. The mud was over an inch deep on the floor, but they succeeded in getting a stove up, and, with boards laid upon chairs, made their couches for the night, not, however, until the boys had shoveled a cart load or two of mud out of the house. In a few days they had the house so that it presented a more cheerful aspect. Adapting themselves as best they could to the circumstances, they lived nearly isolated from their kind through a long and cheerless winter, being all alone, with the exception of two families who had followed the work from Conover, and reached that place about

two weeks before. The parties were Fred. Ganshorn and James Kinney; who antedate Mr. Pike's claim to the title, "oldest inhabitant," by about two or three weeks. They did not live within the limits of the present village, however, but were about a hundred rods below. The winter was unusually severe and protracted, the last passage of the snow plow being on March 28, 1876, and that after a three days' effort from McGregor.

The village of Ridgeway lies in Lincoln township, about midway between Calmar and Cresco, on the line of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway. The place had neither pope, bishop nor priest at its christening; nor was it developed under patronage, but "grewed," like Topsy, under rather discouraging circumstances. Its horoscope was cast by a class of juggling speculators, whose interests centered in the railroad towns on either side of it, and whose prophetic afflatus against the place was further augmented by a few subsidized echoes in the employ of the railroad company. In fact, so faithfully did misrepresentation do its work for the first two years after the railroad was completed, that hardly any one could be found with temerity or pluck enough to take advantage of the inducements offered in the natural capacities of the place for a grain market. A settled indifference on the part of the railroad company, manifest in their inattention to their own interests here up to that time, and for a year or two subsequent, grew out of the active opposition of certain officials at an earlier day. It appears from the records that Judge Noggle, attorney for the railroad company, who secured the right of way through this region, bought the quarter section upon which the village is now located, for S. S. Merrill, general manager of the road, at first, but soon after secured it for himself, but failed to divide as had been done at Conover and Cresco, hence the war. The place remained for nearly a year after the road was completed to Cresco without a single effort being put forth in the way of improvements, and to J. L. Flowers, formerly of Fort Atkinson, belongs the honor of breaking the spell. Braving the force of an ill-boding prophecy, he came to the place in the month of July, 1867, and built a grain warehouse. The ice being broken, he was soon followed by Gilchrist & Co., who built another. Other parties of different professions and business came to the place, and some, with some fear and trembling, began to build.

Dr. A. M. Blackman, who with W. H. Allen, of Beloit, Wis., had bought the quarter section of Noggle about the time Flowers began to build, came on in October and put up a large building for a drug store and dwelling. Allen, who meantime had established a lumber yard in the

the place, set a force at work about the same time on another large building for a general merchandise store, which was soon completed and filled by D. C. Monty, from Conover, for the winter trade. About the same time Flowers built a small dwelling house for his family. Two or three more were erected by other parties, and by the time winter set in the place was fairly alive with business. The next year improvements went on rapidly. Several more grain warehouses were put up, and the activity in the grain trade at this place since has been perceptibly felt, not only by the railroad towns on either side of it, but even in Decorah itself.

Up to this time the railroad company had no building for the accommodation of either passengers or freight, but at a special meeting of the stockholders, directors and principal officers of the company, in the summer of 1867, a bill favoring the building of a depot at this place was introduced, and after considerable discussion, carried, and an appropriation of \$257.75 voted for that purpose. The seventy-five cent was not in the original appropriation, but was a contingent, specifically for repairs on the platform already standing, a structure 50 feet in length, 18 inches high, and 4 feet  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, built the year before for the accommodation of the public, and which, from hard usage and constant wear was in a sadly dilapidated condition. In accordance with the decision of the council, a force of carpenters, under the inspiration of the \$257, was set at work, and a depot built—an imposing structure, 16x24 feet base, and towering heavenward not quite enough to endanger the language of the builders. The building when completed consisted of one reception room for the traveling public, a ticket office, baggage room, telegraph office, smoking room, and store room for general merchandise. Whenever business was at flood tide, a vacant room, 7x12 feet, in the hand car house, which was built double and stood near the depot, was used as a store room for surplus merchandise, and sometimes the overplus was shielded for a few days by the canopy of heaven. Seriously, the whole institution as it stood, was a disgrace to the company, and a pointed insult to its patrons and to the town. The platform from which travelers had to enter the the cars, or to alight therefrom, if by chance the train stopped opposite it, which did not always occur, as a means of exit or entrance, was really dangerous to life and limb. I will give one instance of the many that occurred here under the old regime, to show the inconvenience and danger to which the traveling public were subjected from insufficient accommodations. A lady, the wife of J. McEvoy, of Beloit, Wis., an invalid suffering from that baleful disease,



consumption, came through on the cars to this place early in March, 1869. The trip was undertaken under advice, as a change, it was thought, might benefit her. The train stopped as usual, baggage and express cars opposite the platform; passenger coaches stretching way back, with a ditch on either side, wherein passengers might alight if they wished to stop. The invalid, with a child in charge, two years old, attempted to get off, but the distance from the car step to the ditch was so great that she failed on the first trial, and, as the bell rang at that moment for a start, she caught the child in her arms, and in sheer desperation was about to jump from the train, when a lady who fortunately happened to be passing at that moment, noticing her dilemma, came to her aid. Taking the child from her arms she placed it on the bank, of the ditch, and then helped the invalid down just as the train was starting. In striving to reach the platform, some fifty feet away, she wet her feet; a severe cold followed, attended with such unfavorable symptoms that it was deemed advisable for her to return home the next week. Attended by one of her sisters—there were two here at the time, whom she came to see—she went back, and in about two weeks thereafter, was laid in the grave.

Although the moral element has been steadily on the increase for a few years, the place had been up to this time the theatre of a full average of disgraceful brawls, street fights, accidents, and fatalities consequent upon the demands of the insatiate demon who presides over the ruling evil—strong drink. The first serious case of probationary penance was a broken leg. The next victim, Lars Thompson, fell under the rear car of a freight train that was backing in upon the side-track, at 10 o'clock at night, and had both legs cut or crushed off below the knees. A few weeks later the chapter closed for the time in the death of John Wholehan, who, under the influence of liquor, wandered from the village a couple of miles up the railroad track, and was struck in the breast by an engine coming down and instantly killed. The case of Thompson, the first serious railroad accident at this place, threw the town into considerable excitement, and while everybody was anxious, and nobody willing to act the part of the Good Samaritan, C. Larsen, a poor man, but one whose humanitarian principles were not warped or chained by considerations of self-interest, came forward and offered his home as an asylum for the sufferer. He was, accordingly, under the directions of Dr. A. M. Blackman, who just then arrived upon the spot, carried to Larsen's house, followed by an excited crowd, who immediately filled the room into which he was taken, clamoring to know if

there was any hope in the case. "You shall see," said the doctor, throwing off his coat and rolling up his sleeves, at the same time drawing a huge jack-knife from his pocket, a hint coupled with an admonitory objurgation to the crowd (considerably varied from any form laid down in the Sacred Canon) that sent them out of the room in a jiffy. Having cleared the room, the doctor called to his assistance three or four whose nerves were not altogether unstrung, and after explaining to them in a few words the desperate nature of the case and the necessity of immediate action, said he would undertake to amputate the man's limbs and save his life, if they would but obey implicitly his directions. The amputation was performed, the poor fellow's limbs dressed, and he comfortably arranged on a couch. In about two months thereafter he was "stumping" the town apparently unaffected morally by the chastisement—one of those cases wherein the mercy of the Lord, signally manifested in connection with the rod, would appear to be without avail.

About the time Flowers began to build his warehouse, Mr. S. Pike sent in a petition to the Postmaster General containing the names of nearly all the men in the township, for a postoffice—a petition that met with prompt attention—and by the time business opened Ridgway had a postoffice in running order, Mr. Pike receiving the appointment as postmaster with a salary commensurate with its prospective business—\$12 per year. Though not only willing but anxious to serve the country, the new postmaster, after getting the machine in running order and attending it a few weeks conjointly with Hank Garfield, who had been appointed deputy, turned the business over to Louis Heinberg. Monty failing in business soon after, the postoffice was kept in the same building by Heinberg until fall, when Dr. George Bolles, of Decorah, who in a brief visit to the place detected the inducements offered to capital, bought it of Allen, and put in a good stock of goods. This occurred in the fall of 1868. As the Doctor's store was the best place for the office, Mr. Pike transferred it to him, and he held it during the five years he remained in trade here. After building up a prosperous trade, the Doctor sold out and went to California. J. I. Ringstad, who bought him out, succeeded to the postoffice, at which time the office was paying a respectable revenue. Ringstad was one of the chief sufferers by the fire which swept the village with the besom of destruction the next spring (1874) losing his store and nearly all his stock. His loss was, however, pretty well covered by insurance, so that it did not fall so heavy on him as some others.

Ridgway was organized into an independent school district during the year 1875, since which time it may be said our scholars are advancing in their studies. It has a good school house, with an average attendance of scholars during school terms; but they are not well advanced. Educational interests have always dragged here, but there are hopeful indications of a more general effort in that direction in the immediate future, for which the people of Ridgway may be thankful. There is but one church edifice in town, and that a small wooden structure built by a body of dissenters from the old established Lutheran Church among the Norwegians. This house is not completed, and is seldom used. The Methodists and Adventists hold meetings in the school house.

In the spring of 1874 (May 9) Ridgway was swept by a fire that seemed for a time determined to wipe out the entire village. The fire started in a small untenanted wooden structure on the corner where the Herchmer House now stands. A continuous blast from the south swept across the Square, taking everything in the line of the wind. The weather had been very dry for some time previous, and the densely-packed wooden row fronting the railroad was simply a line of tinder-boxes through which the fire swept without let or hinderance, and one hour from the time the alarm was given four-fifths of the business interests of the town were in ashes. The fire originated with two little boys, 4 years old, lighting a cigar in the house above mentioned. The fire devoured everything in its course, including, besides the business row and dwellings, four grain warehouses, the depot (unlamented) and a fine water-tank, which the Railroad Company had just completed. The entire loss could not, however, be reckoned in dollars and cents, as one human life was sacrificed to the destroying element. Daniel Rice, a saloon-keeper, who, in the excitement attending the awful holocaust, had been trying to check the flames and save his house, finding that all must go, removed his horse and buggy from the barn to a place of safety, and then, entering the saloon, took what money he had in the drawer, together with a small tin box containing notes, other papers, and about \$200 in money, and rushed out with them just as the fire swooped down upon his house. Passing through his barn, which stood about thirty feet from the rear end of the saloon, he crossed to the other street and threw the box into his buggy. Just then he remembered a package of \$700 in greenbacks which he had stowed away in a little snugger back of his money drawer but a few days before. He



hastened back to the house, which was then in flames, as well as his barn. As he passed through the barn the fire struck him, but, thinking only of his money, he crossed the yard to the rear door of the house. But the flames barred his entrance. Reluctantly he turned back, pressed his way through the burning barn, and was discovered as he emerged from it, his clothes all on fire. A party of men were guarding Gulbranson's harness shop at the time, and one of them, with a bucket of water, hastened to extinguish the fire. But it was too late to save him. He had inhaled the fiery blast, and, as the event proved, was beyond hope. He passed into David Dorn's house, and was followed by Mr. Pike a few moments after. S. Pike cut the shirts, two heavy cotton ones, from his back, which was severely burned, as were his arms, from which the sleeves hung in fragments. Not much concern was manifested toward the unfortunate man, as it was supposed that he had not inhaled the flames, and would recover. When Dr. Blackman arrived in town about an hour later, however, the case appeared more serious. The Doctor found his lips and spots on his face literally cooked, and said he had undoubtedly drawn the flames into his lungs, a statement verified next morning, when it was apparent exudation had commenced. No reaction took place from the first, and he died at 9 o'clock on the morning of the 11th. The loss of property was very severe. The total number of buildings—stores, saloons, dwellings and barns—burned, were thirty-four, leaving fifty-nine unburned—the latter being almost wholly dwellings and outbuildings. A careful estimate of the total losses incurred amounted to \$48,730, of which amount only \$11,850 was covered by insurance.

Immediately after the fire the Railroad Company set to work building a depot. The structure, when finished, presented a striking contrast to the old one destroyed by fire. Instead of the narrow and cramped accommodations of the old trap dignified by the name, they have now ample room for every department of their business. The water-tank was also rebuilt, and with one of the best wells on the road, is an important adjunct in the management of its rolling stock.

To-day the village has completely recovered from the severe losses it sustained by the fire. Its business interests have continued to increase, and, as a result, larger and better business buildings serve the accommodations of trade.

The pressure of hard times is very sensibly felt in every branch of business; but in a young town like this, of strong and vigorous growth,

its interests are too firmly interwoven with the general weal of the country around, to suffer any lasting depression from this cause. With the retrenchment and reform "forced upon its citizens by dire necessity" from the failure of crops and other causes, they are made familiar with economy in its strictest sense, and will, in common with others, profit thereby.



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APPENDIX.

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Among the settlers who came to the county in 1851 were the following persons:

E. C. Dunning and wife, Decorah.  
E. E. Clement, Springfield.  
D. D. Huff and wife, Hesper.  
Peter E. Haugen, Decorah.  
Simeon M. Leach and wife, Canoe.  
A. V. Anderson and wife, Decorah.  
Torkel Hanson and wife, Decorah.  
Christopher Evans, Glenwood.  
Iver G. Ringstadt and wife, Madison.  
Herbrand Onstine, Madison.  
Helge Nelson, Myran, Madison.  
Ole M. Asleson and wife, Madison.  
Ole Kittleson and wife, Decorah.  
William Birdsall and wife, Frankville.  
Gulbrand T. Lommen, Decorah.  
Gulbrand Erickson, Wig, Madison.  
Philip Husted, Frankville.  
W. L. Iverson, Pleasant.  
Isaac Birdsall, Frankville.  
Ole Tolefson, Wig, and wife, Decorah.  
George V. Puntey, Burr Oak.  
A. K. Drake, Decorah.  
Erick Olsen, Bakke, and wife, Frankville.  
Nathan Drake, Glenwood.  
Rolland Tobiason and wife, Decorah.

The following persons settled in Winneshiek County during the year 1852:

Andrew Sheets and wife, Decorah Township.  
Silas B. Irvin and wife, Burr Oak.  
E. L. Reynolds, Decorah.  
B. F. Giles, Canoe.



Nelson Burdick and wife, Decorah Township.  
Lucy P. Fannon, Decorah.  
Austid Guneson and wife, Lincoln.  
Elling Olsen and wife, Frankville.  
Hans Gilbertson, Mellaas, Bluffton.  
Alonzo Bradish and wife, Decorah.  
L. S. Pederson and wife, Pleasant.  
Gulbrand Gulbrandson and wife, Springfield.  
Peter Sampson and wife, Pleasant.  
Leonard Cutler and wife, Frankville.  
Leonard Cutler, Jr., Frankville.  
James Lennon, Madison.  
William Beard and wife, Frankville.  
Charles L. Child and wife, Decorah.  
K. Kendsen, ———.  
J. J. Running, Springfield.  
William M. Fannon and wife, Decorah.

In 1853 the following persons took up their permanent settlement in the county :

Henry Kniss, Glenwood.  
Martin N. Rotner, Canoe.  
Amos Smith and wife, Canoe.  
Hiram Manning and Wife, Burr Oak.  
Erick G. Egge and wife, Madison.  
A. Vance and wife, Bloomfield.  
Svend Olsen, Bedne, and wife, Pleasant.  
Lewis L. Cook and wife, Glenwood.  
Ole O. Rovang, Springfield.  
Alexander McKay, Decorah.  
James Tyler and wife, Canoe.  
John Lennon, Decorah.  
Knud Knudson, Sr., Madison.  
Knud Knudson, Madison.  
John Van Pelt, Decorah.  
H. Henterman and wife, Decorah.  
Frank C. Lennon, Frankville.  
Ole P. Rocksvold, Glenwood.  
O. C. Hanson, ———.  
Erick Flaskerud, ———

In the year 1854 the following persons were added to the list of old settlers :

John Frederick Thilig and wife, Decorah.  
Francis Tucker and wife, Decorah.  
David C. Bacon, Decorah.  
O. Blanchard, Canoe.  
Jacob Rotner and wife, Canoe.  
Simon Hanson and wife, Glenwood.  
B. O. Dahly and wife, Decorah.  
S. O. Wilson and wife, Decorah.  
C. R. Pike and wife, Hesper.  
John Ammon and wife, Decorah.  
Edward R. Scott and wife, Madison.  
Ole Anfinson, Tvedt, and wife, Pleasant.  
Even Thykeson and wife, Springfield.  
David P. West and wife, Canoe.  
Knut Thompson, Pleasant.  
Gettorm Allen and wife, Decorah.  
Lewis William Beard, born in Frankville.  
Ira Bloomfield, Decorah.  
Peter Erichstad, Glenwood.  
George C. Winship and wife, Glenwood.  
E. E. Cooley and wife, Decorah.  
G. W. Oxley and wife, Bloomfield.  
Lysander Bowman and wife, Hesper.  
George Merrill and wife, Decorah.  
William Fineld and wife, Fremont.  
J. Henderson, ———.  
Truls A. Edger, ———.  
Thore Bolson, ———.  
A. C. Hitchcock, Fremont.  
A. Richardson, ———.  
John McKay, ———

The year 1855 saw the following names added to the list of old settlers :

Halsten Nelson, Springfield.  
William Drew and wife, Glenwood.  
H. S. Tucker and wife, Canoe.  
John Meagher, Decorah.  
Cyrus Williams and wife, Frankville.

Phillip Pfister and wife, Pleasant.  
Samuel Wise and wife, Pleasant.  
William Glover and wife, Canoe.  
Gilbert O. Rusted and wife, Decorah.  
Henry Adams and wife, Decorah.  
Thomas Eckart and wife, Decorah.  
D. N. Hawley and wife, Decorah.  
M. R. Bentley, Jr., Madison.  
J. C. Spencer and wife, Decorah.  
John Greer, Decorah.  
William Putney, Canoe.  
Norris Miller, Decorah.  
C. E. Dickerman, Decorah.  
Amos J. McKay and wife, Decorah.  
John D. Kelley and wife, Decorah.  
W. G. Sawyer and wife, Decorah.  
Fletcher Brittain and wife, Hesper.  
John Steffes and wife, Washington.  
James Gorean, Decorah.  
Pell M. Smith, Decorah.  
Peter Knudsen, Madison.  
Joseph McMahan and wife, Decorah.  
George D. Draper and wife, Decorah.  
C. Fred Hiller, Decorah.  
Edwin M. Farnsworth, Orleans.  
Michael Womeldorf, Pleasant.  
John Beadle and wife, Bloomfield.  
B. T. Barfoot and wife, Decorah.  
John Finn, Decorah.  
W. B. Updegraff, Decorah.  
C. B. Fingerson and wife, Burr Oak.  
John M. Akers and wife, Decorah.  
Leonard Standring, Decorah.  
Patrick Roney, Decorah.  
James Drew and wife, Glenwood.  
Albert M. McKay, Decorah.  
Gates M. Forbes and wife, Decorah.  
Jacob Ammer, Decorah.  
James P. McKinnie, Washington.  
Patrick Flemming, ———.



George Yarwood, Calmar.  
M. H. Howard, Orleans.  
James Bucknell, Decorah.  
W. H. Bently, Bluffton.  
John Henderson, ———.  
Martin Botsford, Canoe.  
George W. Adams, Decorah.  
J. Nelson, ———.  
William Pake, ———.  
Henry Weitman, ———.  
Ole P. Tenold, ———.

The following persons became residents of the county during the year 1856, and with this year properly ends the credit of being an old settler. The names that appear here are but a partial list of the settlers that made homes in the county during these first years of its history :

Charles G. Howard, Decorah.  
C. N. Goddard, Decorah.  
Henry Heivly and wife, Decorah.  
William C. Adsit, Decorah.  
Jeddediah Miller and wife, Canoe.  
Mary A. Simpson, Decorah.  
Edward Riley and wife, Decorah.  
Fred B. Landers and wife, Decorah.  
A. G. Seavey and wife, Decorah.  
P. F. Brown and wife, Decorah.  
J. H. Womeldorf and wife, Decorah.  
Ogden Casterton, Highland.  
Emilius I. Weiser, Decorah.  
James F. Simpson, Decorah.  
Silas Dayton and wife, Decorah.  
Delilah C. Reed and husband, Decorah.  
Andrew Gulikson, Decorah.  
Gilbert Gullikson, Decorah.  
Robert Bucknell and wife, Bluffton.  
Thomas N. Wilson and wife, Hesper.  
Gunder Helgeson, Madison.  
Thomas Dolan and wife, Madison.  
Martha A. Simpson, Decorah.  
John Dinger and wife, Canoe.  
Cyrus McKay and wife, Decorah.  
Thomas O'Brien and wife, Glenwood.  
R. W. Kirkland, Decorah.  
L. H. Talber, Hesper.  
R. F. Shear, Canoe.  
James Striner, Decorah.  
A. O. Lommen, born in Springfield.

# FARMING MACHINERY!

---

*To the Farmers of Winneshiek and Adjoining Counties:*

Having established ourselves in the business of selling *FARMING MACHINERY* at this point, we are desirous of calling the attention of the farming community to our list of machines, which we have found, after an experience of nine years in the business, to be the best adapted to the wants of the farmers in Northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota of any manufactured in the United States; and we propose selling them to you at prices within the reach of all.

When you want anything in our line, give us a call, and if we can't suit you with Goods and Prices, tell us why, and we will try again.

Here is our List of Machines for the Season of 1877:

## **ELWARD HARVESTER.**

**Buckeye Harvester.**

**Buckeye Mower and Reaper—Combined.**

**Buckeye Light Mower.**

**Warrior Mower, 4 feet 3 inches, and 4 feet 7 inches Cut.**

**Empire State Mower.**

**Seymour Mower. Triumph Reaper.**

**New Manny Reaper—Combined. Economist Reaper, 6 ft. ct.**

**Roberts, Thorp & Co. Vibrating Thresher.**

**Minnesota Chief Thresher.**

**Garr, Scott & Co.'s Indiana Thresher. Garr, Scott & Co. Threshing Engines.**

**Vandiver & Quincy Corn Planters.**

**Challenge Corn Planter.**

**Standard Riding Corn Cultivator.**

**Badger Riding Corn Cultivator. Eagle Riding and**

**Walking Cultivator. Eagle Walking Cultivator.**

**Dexter Walking Cultivator.**

**Eagle Reversible Steel Tooth Harrow—72 teeth.**

**40 and 60 Teeth Scotch Harrow.**

**Randall's Pulverizing Harrow. Victor Self-Dump Rake.**

**Star Hand-Dump Rake.**

**The Hart & Norton Fanning Mill.**

REMEMBER! That every article in the above list is strictly FIRST CLASS, and fully warranted by the manufacturers and by us; and as we are not paying a lot of agents to bore you to death, you will save their salaries by buying from us.

*Remember that we Sell only the Best Machines and Challenge Competition.*

Office and Warerooms, Opposite Ammon, Scott & Co.'s Machine  
Shops, Water Street, Decorah, Iowa.

## **PAULK & COMSTOCK.**

THE  
**Chicago, Milwaukee <sup>AND</sup> St. Paul**  
RAILWAY

— IS —

The Very Best Route

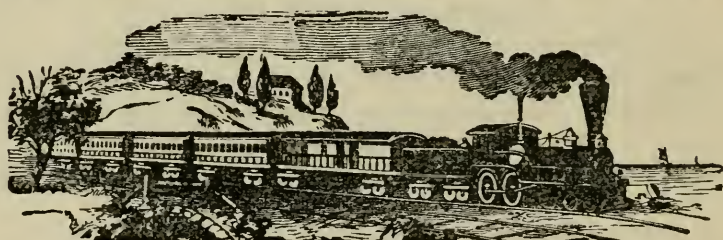
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**New England, the Canadas,**

— AND ALL —

**Eastern and Southern Points.**



It is the only Northwestern Line connecting in the same Depot in Chicago, with any of the great Eastern or Southern Lines, and is the most conveniently located with reference to reaching any depot, hotel or place of business in that city.


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GEO. W. SCOTT, Secretary.

# AMMON, SCOTT & CO,

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# Agricultural Machinery

Founders  Machinists,

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# AMMON, SCOTT & CO.

PROPRIETORS OF

## DECORAH

### Flouring Mills.

Capacity, 400,000 Barrels  
Per Annum.

*Decorah, Iowa.*

Established 1853.

Incorporated 1870.



# Pioneer Drug Store.

## MEDICINES, PAINTS, Oils, Wall Paper,

BOOKS



DRUGS

## E. I. Weiser, Druggist,

AND DEALER IN

Drugs, Medicines, Perfumery, Toilet Soaps, Brushes,  
Pocket Cutlery, Pocket Books, Trusses, Shoulder  
Braces, Wall Paper,

School Books, Slates, Blank Books, Stationery.  
Paints, Oils, Putty, Varnish, Benzine, Kerosene,  
Turpentine, Tar and Wagon Grease,

**LAMPS, LANTERNS, SHADES, GLOBES AND LAMP CHIMNEYS,**

And all Articles Kept in a First-class Drug Store.

*Prescriptions Compounded with Care at all Hours, Day or Night.*

Farmers, Physicians and Country Merchants will, at all times find my Stock **COMPLETE**, and of the **BEST QUALITY**, and will be sold as **LOW FOR CASH** as by any similar establishment in the County.

*Store First Door East of Winneshiek County Bank,  
Water Street, Decorah.*



# **THE NATIONAL,**

H. B. George, Prop.,      Ossian, Iowa.

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This Hotel is conveniently located near the Depot.

---

G. L. FAUST,  
**Attorney at Law,**  
OSSIAN, IOWA.

---

## **Winneshiek House**

DECORAH, IOWA,

**W. H. VALLEAU, Prop'r.**

---

The WINNESHIEK HOUSE has been re-built, and is the best furnished hotel in the city, and under the stewardship of W. H. VALLEAU, offers superior accommodations to the traveling public.

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## **Aiken's Music Store,**

DECORAH, IOWA,

**PIANOS  ORGANS**

Of first-class manufacture, in variety of style and price. Dealing largely with manufacturers, enables us to give the lowest prices, and most favorable terms as to time payments. Every instrument fully warranted and satisfaction guaranteed. Sheet Music and Books, Piano Covers and Stools on hand.

A. A. AIKEN.

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## **Decorah Musical Academy,**

C. M. AIKEN, Principal.

The best of facilities are here offered for obtaining a musical education at much less expense than in the larger cities.



# R. F. GIBSON & SON,

Dealers in Staple and Fancy

## Dry Goods, Clothing,

Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Groceries, &c.,

For CASH. All Goods are Sold at

### LOWEST PRICES HERE.

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## Moses Greer, Jr.,

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## FINE WATCHES, CLOCKS,

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*Silver and Silver Plated Ware.*

### Violins, Accordeons, Spectacles.

All Kinds of Sewing Machine Attachments, Needles,  
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Jewelry Repairing Neatly Done and Warranted.  
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### BANKING HOUSE OF

## S. W. MATTESON,

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### BANK OF DISCOUNT AND DEPOSIT.

*Receives Time Deposits. Certificates of Deposit Issued Bearing Interest.  
Collections Made. Gold Exchange, Notes, Mortgages and Com-  
mercial Paper in General, Bought.*

Collateral Loans and Commercial Paper form the leading feature of the business.  
3,000 acres of Land, (wild, improved and timber land,) in Winneshiek County, for  
sale. Also, 100 town lots in Decorah.

# O. T. GRATTON,

— GENERAL AGENT FOR —

## C. H. & L. J. McCORMICK.

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### OUR HARVESTER

Is now so near perfection that any farmer wishing to purchase a machine of its style, if he will but make an examination of it for himself, will readily see its merit. We claim for it over all others, that of *strength, durability, and lightness of draft*, and its perfect working in all its several parts. We challenge the world to produce even its equal, let alone its superior.

### Our Improved Advance.

The ADVANCE is a combined machine in the strictest sense of the word, having two bars of entirely different construction, one perfectly adapted to mowing, and the other to reaping, thus making two distinct machines combined in one, at a cost very little above that of a separate reaping machine.

### The Improved Prize Mower

Is a two-wheeled machine with jointed bar, and cuts a swath four feet in width. *It cuts equally well on rough or smooth ground, and in thick, matted grass or clover*, as well as in thin light stuff. The draft is light, and being made of the best materials, it is very durable.

O. T. GRATTON,

Decorah, Iowa.

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**Pioneer Photographer and Artist.**

Artistic Work, of All Kinds, of Superior Excellence, Unequalled Else-  
where in the City, Guaranteed.

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**Attorney and Counselor at Law.**

*COLLECTIONS PROMPTLY MADE.*

Office on Winnebago Street, - - - Decorah, Iowa.

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**E. E. COOLEY,**  
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